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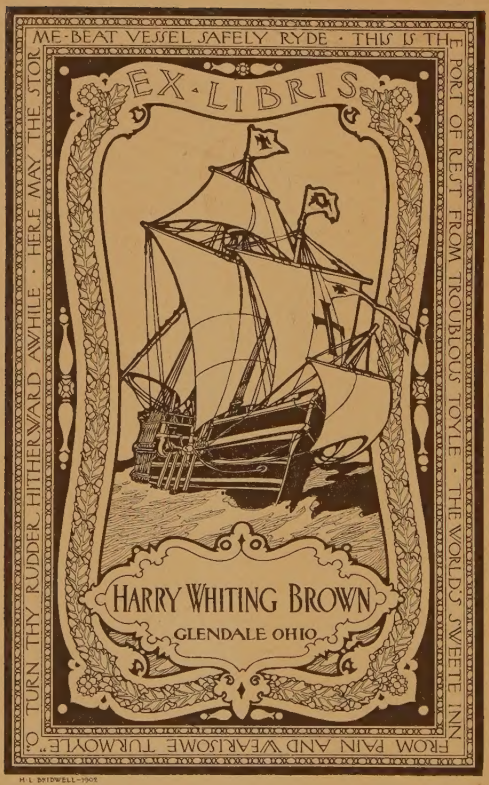
THE STORY OF A COUNTRY CHURCH

BY

CHARLES W. HOFFMAN.



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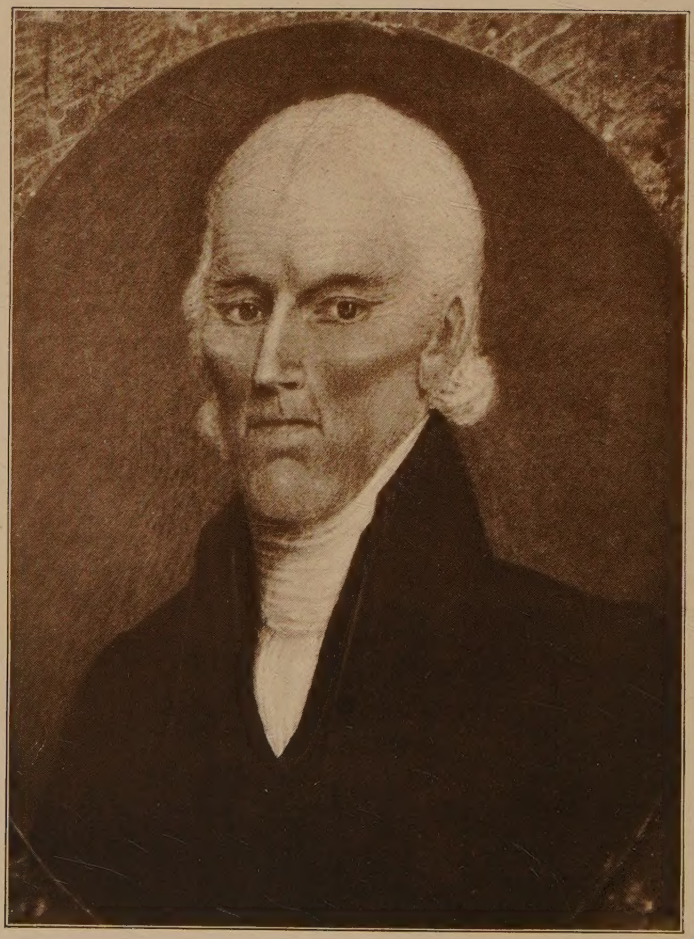

Rev. James Kemper.

THE STORY

—OF—

A COUNTRY CHURCH

—BY—

CHARLES W HOFFMAN

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

WESTERN TRACT SOCIETY,
CINCINNATI, O.
1902.

PREFACE.

In the preparation of the following historical sketch of the Springdale Church, the writer desires to acknowledge the assistance rendered him by Mrs. Helen Kemper Blinn, who placed in his hands many manuscripts containing considerable matter relating to the subject. Among these papers were letters of Rev. John Thomson and Abraham Lindley, the latter having been one of the first elders; the manuscript "History of the Springfield Church," by George P. Bergen, and the correspondence and records of Charles A. B. Kemper. Mrs. Blinn, the daughter of Charles A. B. Kemper and the granddaughter of Rev. James Kemper, the founder of the church, has heard at first hand the story of its early trials and successes. Her recollections of the conversations she has had with her ancestors in this respect have been incorporated into the text of the narrative.

Valuable aid has also been afforded by Dr. William H. James, the present pastor. Free access has been given to the records of the session covering a period of a hundred years, as well as to the original papers connected with the founding of the church.

McNemar's "Kentucky Revival," "Galbraith's "History of the Chillicothe Presbytery" and Dr. Gallaher's "Western Sketch Book" have been freely consulted and numerous quotations taken from each of them.

Obligations are due to a number of elderly men and women, living in Springdale, who have been identified with the church in one capacity or another for nearly three quarters of a century. By means of conversations with them it has been possible to obtain a fairly clear conception of the true history of the church.

C. W. H.

GLENDALE, OHIO.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

1792—1803. PAGE

IN THE FOREST..... 15

The Journey Northward—Pittman's Tavern—The Indians — Dissension — Danger — Tucker's Station — Return to Fort Washington—Pleasant Valley Station—The Stockade — Worshiping Beneath the Trees — Perils of the Pioneers—General Wayne—Rev. James Kemper—Subscriptions — Archibald Steele — His Disappointments — Washington Presbytery—Its Members—John W. Brown —Calvinism—Finley—Rev. John Thomson—His Ordination—Erection of a Meeting-house — Revivals — Thomson's Success.

CHAPTER II.

1803—1812.

THE SECEDERS..... 36

The Kentucky Revival — Voltaire — La Fayette — Thomas Paine—Infidelity—Environment of the Settlers—Discipline—William and John McGee—Camp Meetings—Bodily Exercises—Spread of Skepticism and False Doctrines—Washington Presbytery Alarmed—Petition for Examination of McNemar and Thomson—Convicted of Heresy—Withdrawal of Ministers from the Presbytery—Presbytery of Springfield — Suspensions — Thomson's Popularity—McCormick, Perlee and others "Keep the

Faith"—Wallace—Dr. Wilson — Hayden — Holding the Fort.

CHAPTER III.

1803—1805. PAGE

DRIFTING..... 50

The New Lights—Contest for Possession of Church Building—The Presbyterians' Triumph—The Church Across the Road—Rejection of all Creeds—The Last Will and Testament—The Schismatics—Thomson Dances after the Services of the Sacrament at Turtle Creek.

CHAPTER IV.

1805.

THE SHAKERS..... 60

An Apology—Malcolm Worley—Waiting for the Manifestations of the Spirit—The Three Travelers—Bates—Meacham—Young—The Shaker Missionaries—Their Reception in Kentucky—Their Reception in Springfield—Thomson Refuses to Accept their Doctrines — Their Journey to Turtle Creek—Millcreek Valley—Conversion of Worley—Laying the Foundations of Union Shaker Village — Poem by John McNemar — John Dunlevy — Thomson Opposes Shakerism—The Shaker Settlement Prospers—Thomson's Attitude Toward the Shakers.

CHAPTER V.

1805—1832.

THE RETURN TO THE FOLD..... 73

Enthusiasm of the New Lights—Meeting in Hilt's Woods—The Light of Truth—Nature of the Revival—Thomson's Enthusiasm Wanes — His Congregation Returns with

Him to the Presbyterian Church—After Eight Years—Harmony and Good Will—Growth and Prosperity—Drunkenness—Enforcement of Regulations—Accessions—Dr. Gallaher—Camp-Meeting in Hageman's Grove in Sharon—Close of Thomson's Pastorate—The Woman in Black.

CHAPTER VI.

1832—1848. PAGE

REV. ADRIAN ATEN AND HIS SUCCESSOR..... 85

Graves—Gazley—Graham — Election — Installation—Abandonment of the Old Church—First Sermon in the New Church—Members of the Session—Strict Discipline—Revision of the Church Rolls—Charles A. B. Kemper—Whisky — The Old and New School Controversy — Aten's Success — McDonald — Rev. James M. Stone — Policy of the Session Concerning Old and New School Adherents—Revival of 1843—Ecclesiastical Law—Church Trials.

CHAPTER VII.

1846—1866.

SLAVERY..... 94

The Presbyterian Church and Slavery—Rev. Adrian Aten an Abolitionist—His Course in Presbytery and Synod—His Withdrawal from the Church—His Return to Springfield—The Associate Reformed Church—Aten's Followers—The Presbyterians' Protest—Character of Stone—His Resignation—The "Courthouse"—Gilliland—Hair—Rev. George P. Bergen Installed—The Last Trial—Bergen's Criticism of Aten—Aten's Good Fight—He Leaves Springfield—Revival of 1853—Nimrod of Springfield—Bergen Resigns — Dr. Ludlow D. Potter — Glendale Female College—Pastorate of Thomas Hughes—The Elders.

CHAPTER VIII.

1866—1902. PAGE

DR. WILLIAM H. JAMES..... 113

On the Potomac—Captain of Supplies of Sixth Army Corps — Pastor of Seventh Presbyterian Church—Installed at Springfield—Prospects—Rev. Samuel K. Holtsinger—His Escape from the South—Revival of 1869—Oak Hill — Increase in Membership—A New Church Erected—Laying of Corner Stone—Judge Hunt's Address—Dedication—Twenty-fifth Anniversary—Addresses—Centennial Anniversary—Mrs. James—In the Presbytery.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION..... 134

The Sons of John Thomson—Founding of Wabash College—John Thomson, Jr.—The Land and the Book—Prof. Samuel S. Thomson—Ministers Trained at Springfield.

INTRODUCTION.

About fifteen miles from Cincinnati, on the Springfield and Carthage Turnpike, is the old town of Springdale. A settlement was made here in the last decade of the eighteenth century, and for fifty years it was recognized as the wealthiest and most important town in Hamilton County. In 1821 the Ohio Gazetteer devoted greater space to its description than any other settlement was able to command.

It became known as the "post town" between Hamilton and Cincinnati, and the stage drivers, teamsters, drovers and travelers stopped here for their midday rest or to pass the night. At one time the town had several taverns, near each of which were large enclosures and sheds to secure and shelter the stages and sometimes heavily loaded wagons, as well as the hogs, cattle, and horses, of which there were frequently great numbers.

To supply the needs of a large farming community and the patrons of the taverns, required the labor of a number of artisans and tradesmen. The services of the blacksmiths, shoemakers, hatters, and cabinet makers were always in demand, while the trade in groceries and provisions was large and lucrative. It is said that a hatter plied his trade in Spring-

dale for more than sixty years. His product, it is true, was crude and cumbersome, being made of fur, and about as large as a bushel basket, but it harmonized fairly well with the style of head-dress of the first half of the century. In a "pork house," recently demolished, and located in the lower portion of the town, several hundred hogs were killed every season, and the dressed meat shipped sometimes to Cincinnati, and sometimes to Hamilton and the cities beyond.

In the manufacturing of agricultural implements Springdale, in early days, was pre-eminent. It was here that one of the first reaping machines ever used in the country was invented. A few of the old "Hilt's harvesters" may still be found in rickety sheds or deserted fence corners. The inventor was unable, for want of means, to improve on the original invention, and consequently what might have been a promising industry was lost to the town forever. The "Hilt's roller," however, another invention of the same person, is to-day one of the best and most useful implements of its kind.

The manners and customs of the town were those of primitive New England. To while away the tedium of the long winter nights, a number of the town people and the country residents assembled at the various taverns to listen to the harangues and argu-

ments of the transient visitors. The affairs of the church, especially during the "New Light" controversy and the period between 1837 and 1851, afforded a standing topic for discussion. Matters of doctrine and expediency were vehemently argued pro and con, with a varying degree of ability. The minister of the local church was present, occasionally, to refute error and gain converts.

The services at the "meeting house," often full of novelty and interest, were often largely attended by the non-residents, some of whom did not always conduct themselves with decorum; while others, deeply impressed, departed and carried the message of the church to distant parts, and thus spread its fame.

After the building of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton Railway, all stage and team traffic through Springdale ceased, and the tavern keepers closed their doors to the public. This was a severe blow to the business of the town, and several mechanics were obliged to seek other fields of labor. The trade of the country people, too, became distributed among the villages that sprung up along the line of the railway, which had left Springdale a mile and a half west of its tracks.

The old town now lost its prestige; it was not long until there were but few objects to indicate its whilom prosperity and wealth. In the main thor-

oughfare, which once was filled with the hurry and bustle of travelers arriving and departing, often the only object to be seen was a farmer's wagon in front of the only grocery that remained. Notwithstanding the ruination of trade and business, the membership of the church was not decreased nor its usefulness impaired. It continued to be the most prominent church in the valley, and to-day the "Mother Church" is considered second to none in the county.

The town was known by the name of Springfield until 1867, when, for reasons connected with the postal service, it was changed to Springdale. The Springfield Church, too, was designated, after this time, as the "Springdale Church."

When Springdale lost its place as a business center, the residents, except those who were engaged in mechanical occupations, did not remove. They continued to reside here, while they pursued their vocations in adjacent localities or in the city of Cincinnati. Many of her sons became prominent men and held high positions of honor and trust, among the most distinguished of whom might be mentioned Judge Joseph Cox, who sat on the bench of the Common Pleas and Circuit Courts for a third of a century; Hon. Oliver P. Morton, who became Governor of Indiana; Hon. Samuel F. Hunt, a Judge of the Superior Court of Cincinnati for several years, and

still recognized as one of the most gifted orators in the United States; Judge T. A. O'Connor, of the Superior Court; Judge J. Wilson Cochran, of the Sixth Illinois Circuit; Colonel W. M. Berry; and Jere M. Cochran whose literary productions have shed additional luster on the fame of the Miami Valley.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE FOREST, 1792—1803.

In the fall of 1792 a company of pioneers started from Fort Washington to seek a site for settlement in the valley of a stream designated in the Indian vernacular as the Maketewa, but later known by the more vulgar name of Millcreek. Their journey could not be otherwise than pregnant with hardship and danger. Their course was along the trail over which the Indians passed to meet their enemies on the common battleground south of the Ohio. The Federal Government, too, at this time was waging a war with the savages that was to determine the supremacy of either the white or red race in the Northwest Territory. Beside every path and byway that led northward from the Fort the wily enemies of the pioneers were hidden, ready to spring upon their victims with a suddenness and impetuosity that defied resistance.

After leaving the Fort, where their mode of life had been exceedingly irksome, the travelers passed over a causeway of logs constructed across a marsh known as the Frog Pond,* and climbed the steep and

* The Frog Pond was formerly located near the present intersection of Fifth and Main Streets, Cincinnati, Ohio.

rugged hill a mile or more beyond. Avoiding the passes where the Indians might be secreted, they wended their way toward the north and at a distance of about fifteen miles arrived at a lofty eminence upon the brow of which Jonathan Pittman in later years kept a tavern. Turning and looking towards the south, they could see the hills that bordered the river; on their right was the east fork of the Maketewa, while on their left and toward the northwest the west fork of the same stream wound in graceful curves through a low, level valley, a mile or more in width, and covered with unbroken forests. The wild beauty of the scenery, heightened by the myriad colors that danced on the waves of the vast sea of autumnal foliage that covered the whole landscape, as well as the natural advantages for settlement that this delectable region presented, impelled the settlers to pitch their tents near the base of the hill and within the present limits of Woodlawn.

The Indians vigorously resented this intrusion on the part of their enemies. The position of the settlers at once became precarious. It was evident that if a stockade was not immediately constructed, they must return to Columbia. Soon, however, the Indians disappeared, and without molestation they began to clear away the underbrush, fell trees, and construct a stockade within which the cabins were to be erected. By the succeeding spring they had made considerable

progress in improving the land and constructing their defenses. The Indians did not molest them, but dissensions within their own body arose. The land had been divided by agreement before they left Columbia; the boundary lines of the various owners were now found to conflict. Tucker and Foster, two of the most prominent men in the settlement, became involved in a quarrel which resulted in Tucker's returning summarily to Columbia. After his departure there were indications that the Indians were again becoming restless. The stockade was not yet completed, and but a few cabins had been erected. No one seemed to realize that danger was imminent until an American spy placed himself between the settlers and their guns. He warned them of approaching danger, and advised them to flee to Fort Washington and remain there until General Wayne completed the organization of his army. Acting upon this timely advice, and having no desire to subject themselves to the scalping-knives of the savages, they abandoned their half-constructed fort, which had been given the name of Tucker's Station, and fled precipitously toward the south.

The wild beasts that emerged from the woods to make their lairs in the deserted buildings were frightened away by the Miami hunter, who, as he gazed upon the fort, vainly hoped that its late occupants would never return.

During the winter of 1793 and 1794 all differences between Tucker and Foster were adjusted. In the following spring, with those who had accompanied them the preceding year, they returned to the Station. In accordance with the terms of an agreement that was to govern them in the division of the land and the erection of fortifications, they began to build a block-house, on common ground, on the west bank of the creek, a short distance northeast of Tucker's Station. They gave the name of Pleasant Valley Station to this new settlement, and a spring that was located on the east bank of the stream, and supplied an abundance of pure water, became known as "Station Spring."

The block-house was located in the northeast corner of an enclosure of pickets, about three hundred feet square. A similar structure of lesser proportions was erected in the southeast corner. Within the enclosure were several cabins where the settlers were housed for a number of months after their arrival. On the outside a few cabins had been built, but could not be inhabited because of the danger of their position. West of the stockade the trees and underbrush had been burned, so that the enemy might be seen at some distance.

Soon after the completion of the "Station" the settlers brought their families from Columbia. At this time they assembled beneath the trees outside the

stockade and engaged in the worship of God. This was the beginning of that organization which became known as the Springfield Church.

The succeeding months were filled with days of terror and despair. The worshipers, for a while, continued their services in the grove that bordered the clearing, posting their sentinels on all sides; but the frequency of the whoop of the Indians and the shower of bullets that succeeded it soon compelled them to remain within the stockade. To venture out was to risk being shot by some savage who, creeping stealthily as a panther through the woods, had secreted himself behind some bush or half-decayed log. At nightfall the sinewy forms of the redskins might be seen flitting like phantoms through the tangled undergrowth of the forest just beyond the charred stumps that dotted the intervening space. Throughout the hours of darkness their cries mingled with the howling of the denizens of the wilderness and the mysterious noises incident to the woods.

Provisions at the Station could only be obtained at uncertain intervals, as the traffic between Fort Washington and Fort Hamilton had all but ceased. Even the obtaining of water from the spring but a rod or more distant was full of perils. The memory of the frightful midnight attack on White's Station,*

* The site of White's Station was near the ice pond at Carthage, Ohio.

on the third crossing of the creek, was fresh in their minds. The "Legion" of General Wayne, or "The Wind," as he was called by the Indians, was between them and the enemy; but predatory bands of savages might easily swing around the army and attack them before aid could be summoned.

Trusting in God, whose aid they never failed to invoke at morning, noon and night, they waited with Christian fortitude for news from the north. Should Mad Anthony defeat the allied tribes of swarthy warriors, the conflict would cease, and they could proceed in the building of homes for themselves and their posterity; should he, like Harmar and St. Clair, be overcome, his army routed and cut to pieces, then all was lost. In this event they would be compelled not only to return to Columbia, but to again trace their way through the wilderness and over the rugged heights of the Alleghenies to their old homes in New Jersey, Virginia and Northern Carolina.

When, in the latter part of August, 1794, a runner stopped at Pleasant Valley Station and proclaimed to the careworn inmates the glad news of the victory of the army at Fallen Timbers, their apprehensions gave way to transports of joy, and the neighboring woods resounded with shouts and cheers.

Struggling over prostrate trees and through tangled vines and underbrush, the fearless commander of the American forces had met Little Turtle and his

dusky hosts below the rapids of the Maumee. In the fierce battle that followed the enemy was routed with heavy loss, and the power of the Indian Confederacy in the Northwest forever broken.

General Wayne did not return at once to Fort Washington, but remained in the northern country until the year following, when, in August, he met the Indians at Greenville, and, in the presence of eleven hundred sachems and warriors, negotiated a treaty that insured peace and protection to the settlements. In the meantime a body of soldiers were quartered at Pleasant Valley Station, that they might be ready for service should the savages again break out in murderous warfare.

It was not long after the treaty of Greenville was consummated that all apprehensions of death by the tomahawk or scalping-knife passed away. The guns were left in the arsenal, and the settlers tilled their clearings in peace. One after another left the stockade and built a cabin far out in the wilderness. Here, mid the gloom of perpetual shade, sequestered from all social intercourse, were laid the foundations of the homes from which were to emanate influences of lasting benefit to the State. Contrary to the custom of many of the early settlers, the members of this widely separated community assembled regularly once a week at the "Station" to engage in Divine worship. Their leader was Rev. James A. Kemper, who resided

in a block-house * that he had built some time before 1792 on the hill above Fort Washington.

Dr. Kemper was a minister of high repute, of noble birth and hardy nature. He was instrumental in the organization of nearly all the original churches of the Miami Valley. It was due largely to his rugged character and strong convictions that Presbyterianism obtained a strong foothold in Southwestern Ohio. Traveling on horseback through the trackless forest, insensible alike to hardship and danger, he visited the early settlements and planted there the standard of his faith. When, in 1800 and the years that followed, the citadel of Divine Truth was attacked, he became its ablest defender. He shared the trials and misfortunes of the exiles from their kind at Pleasant Valley Station during the trying days of the Indian war. When peace was restored he met with them regularly. Had it not been for his efforts and influence, it is probable that the members of the community could not have been held together long enough to establish a church organization. He called the attention of the Presbytery of Transylvania † to the needs of this meager band of Chris-

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* The block-house of Rev. James Kemper was on the east side of Kemper Lane, between Windsor and McMillan Streets, Walnut Hills, Cincinnati, Ohio.

† The twentieth Presbytery in point of time in the United States.

tians, and henceforth they were considered a charge under the care of this ecclesiastical body, and designated as the "Springfield Congregation."

The inconvenience of meeting in the stockade, which was now becoming dilapidated, and in their own log houses, which were too small to accommodate any considerable number, suggested to the settlers the building of a house for worship. Their success in procuring funds for this purpose is indicated by the following subscription list:

"SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE GRAVEYARD AND MEETING HOUSE." *

"We, whose names are hereto affixed, do promise to pay, or cause to be paid, unto Mr. John Schooley, Mr. William Preston or Luke Foster the several sums annexed to our names, in cash or labor, for the use of procuring a piece of land for a graveyard, and to defray the expense of a temporary meeting house for the Presbyterian Society in this Township of Springfield, on demand, this fourth day of April, 1796."

Names.	Labor, Days.	Labor with Team.	Cash.
John Schooley.....	2	....	£1 10 0
Levi Sayre.....	2	....	£0 15 0

* This instrument is now in the possession of Dr. W. H. James, of Springdale, Ohio.

If no one volunteered a subscription other than those whose names are attached to the above list, it is apparent that the lack of funds was the cause of the delay in the building a church until some years later. In the meantime, in connection with Mr. Kemper, Rev. Peter Wilson and Archibald Steele ministered to this embryo congregation. Mr. Steele, because of the lively interest which he manifested in the spiritual welfare of the Springfield community, deserves a passing notice.

He was a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery of Transylvania. His success as a minister is questionable. At the first meeting of Washington Presbytery, Clear Creek and Orangedale calls were presented for Mr. Steele and accepted by him. An intermediate meeting was appointed to ordain him; Isaiah lxi. 10 was assigned him as a text for his trial sermon; Mr. Dunlevy was appointed to preach the ordination sermon, and Mr. Speer to preside and deliver the charge to the congregation. On the first Tuesday in August, 1799, the day appointed, Mr. Kemper and Mr. Campbell were the only ministers in attendance.

In the following October the Presbytery designated the third Friday in November, at Orangedale, as the time for the ordination ceremony. No change was made in the former arrangements, with the exception that Mr. McNemar was appointed to pre-

side. The Presbytery met according to appointment. Mr. Steele preached from the text assigned him, after which the congregation concluded that they did not desire him as their spiritual adviser, and he was not ordained.

Still persistent, in 1800 he accepted a call from Clear Creek, but the Presbytery refused to sustain his examination for ordination, and requested him to return his license. It was further suggested that "he turn his attention to some other vocation in life, on account of his apparent want of suitable qualifications to fill the office." In 1805, at Hopewell (Montgomery), he received his license again.

At the meeting of Presbytery October 1st, 1806, Mr. Steele was appointed as supply, one-half at Lebanon and one-quarter at Lemon, the latter being the name by which Orangedale was hereafter known. During the winter and early spring he preached to these congregations so satisfactorily that at the meeting of the Presbytery at Lebanon, in the succeeding April, petitions were presented from Lebanon and Lemon praying for their minister's ordination as an evangelist. After careful consideration the Presbytery refused to grant the request, holding that it could not be done "consistently with the rules of discipline." Mr. Steele remained, however, under the care of this Presbytery until five years later, when he was

placed under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Miami.

In 1798 the Synod of Virginia divided the Presbytery of Transylvania and constituted the Presbyteries of Transylvania, West Lexington and Washington. On the minutes of the first meeting of Washington Presbytery, held April 9th, 1799, Springfield is mentioned as one of the churches or "preaching places."

There were seven ministers members of the Presbytery at this time. Their names are familiar to the student of the early history of the Church in the Miami Valley. There was Rev. James Kemper, always ready to champion the orthodox cause; John E. Finley, the first Moderator, in after years suspended from the ministry on the charge of immoral conduct; John P. Campbell, the first Stated Clerk; John Dunlevy and Richard McNemar, whose violent departures from the Faith shook the church to its foundations; William Speer, the founder of the First Presbyterian Church at Chillicothe, and Peter Wilson, who, in the midst of a spirited controversy with his congregation, died before the second meeting of the Presbytery.

The record of this meeting discloses that a verbal supplication for supplies, particularly for an ordained minister, was made to Presbytery on behalf of Springfield by Archibald Steele. At the next meeting, October 24th, 1799, the Rev. John E. Finley was

appointed to preach at Springfield on the second Sabbath of November, and Mr. Dunlevy one Sabbath.

At length the congregation, in pursuance of their design to have a regular minister, engaged Mr. John W. Brown for one year. On October 7th, 1800, they requested Presbytery to ordain him. This request was not granted, as Presbytery considered Mr. Brown deficient in certain literary accomplishments that the General Assembly considered essential to the admission of foreign clergymen within their jurisdiction. He was not taken on probation or permitted to exercise the functions of a public teacher within their bounds. Presbytery declared that in this action there was left no alternative, as there were unfavorable reports too extensively prevalent relating to his moral character, and, "While they were disposed to hope the best as to his personal piety, and willing as they were to treat him with all possible tenderness, yet finding him destitute of very important qualifications, and that general good report so necessary in an evangelical teacher, think themselves not at liberty to recommend him to the congregation at Springfield, though in another way solicitous to pay every attention to them as a vacancy under their care."

The Springfield congregation had been well pleased with Steele and Brown, but both were unfortunate in their attempts to assume the ordination vows. The stern and rugged Presbyterianism of the

Puritans and Huguenots had lost none of its vigor in crossing the Alleghenies. Calvinism and strict adherence to the truth as expounded by the great reformer at Geneva two and a half centuries preceding the settlement of the Northwest Territory, received the same cultivation that had made the plant grow so strong and vigorous in the days of polemical strife and conflict. No one was permitted to assume the ministerial functions unless his moral character was above reproach and he was thoroughly representative of the Calvinistic Faith. Brown was an "independent in thought," and this alone would have disqualified him for the Presbyterian ministry. The Church aimed at unity in thought, action and doctrine, and from its beginning in the Ohio Valley permitted no infraction of its tenets to satisfy seemingly popular sentiments. It moved forward as one body, its members having a common purpose which impelled them to sacrifice and to endure in order to maintain the Faith in its purity, and to proclaim the Gospel to the errant sinner.

It did not always oppose those who were not in sympathy with their Confession of Faith, but they refused to permit them to enroll under its banner.

In 1796, or a few months preceding, Rev. Robert W. Finley, together with a number of his neighbors, freed their slaves and set out from their homes in Mason and Bourbon Counties, Kentucky, for the

Ohio country. Their conscience, they declared, would no longer justify their living in a State that tolerated negro slavery. Winter had now set in, and their journey through the leafless forest was hard and severe. At this time General Wayne was holding a conference with the confederated tribes of Indians at Greenville. Finley and his party attacked an encampment of Indians northeast of Limestone; the Indians retaliated, but were repulsed. Reports of the conflict were soon at Greenville, with the result that all plans for negotiating peace were almost frustrated. General Wayne, it is said, used some harsh language towards the "parson," and the incident was passed over by both whites and Indians. At length, under the leadership of General Nathaniel Massie, they arrived at their destination on the west bank of the Scioto River, and here they founded the city of Chillicothe. In October, 1801, there was an application to Presbytery, which had assembled at Eagle Creek, for the restoration of Mr. Finley, he having been deposed by the Presbytery of Transylvania in 1795 on the ground of inebriety and his contumacious disregard of the citations of Presbytery. The ministers at Eagle Creek, being conversant with these facts, as well as with the many commendable traits of character of Mr. Finley, doubted, however, the sincerity of his promises to maintain a state of sobriety, and resolved, "That longer time will be necessary to evi-

dence the nature of his repentance and heal the wound he has given religion." *

It is apparent that Washington Presbytery, in the early days of its history, determined to adhere strictly to its doctrine and permit no one under the clerical insignia to misrepresent it. Yet the day was not far distant when nearly half of those who voted to refuse to ordain Steele and Brown, and to restore Finley, would be deposed from the Presbyterian ministry, one of them because of conduct unbecoming a minister, the others because of entertaining views subversive to the fundamental doctrines contained in the sacred Scriptures.

The next call of the Springfield congregation for a minister was presented at the meeting of Presbytery at Eagle Creek, October 7th, 1801. Mr. Preston, the commissioner from the church, appeared and applied for the ordination of Rev. John Thomson, a man who for more than thirty years was to wield so potent an influence for good in the religious affairs of the Miami Valley that his character or motives could not be impugned even by those who could not at times but consider his course as fanatical and the doctrine he espoused as decidedly heretical.

He came from North Carolina in 1795, and was

* It is claimed that Mr. Finley was the first Presbyterian minister at Chillicothe. Galbraith, in his history of Chillicothe Presbytery, cites authorities to the contrary.

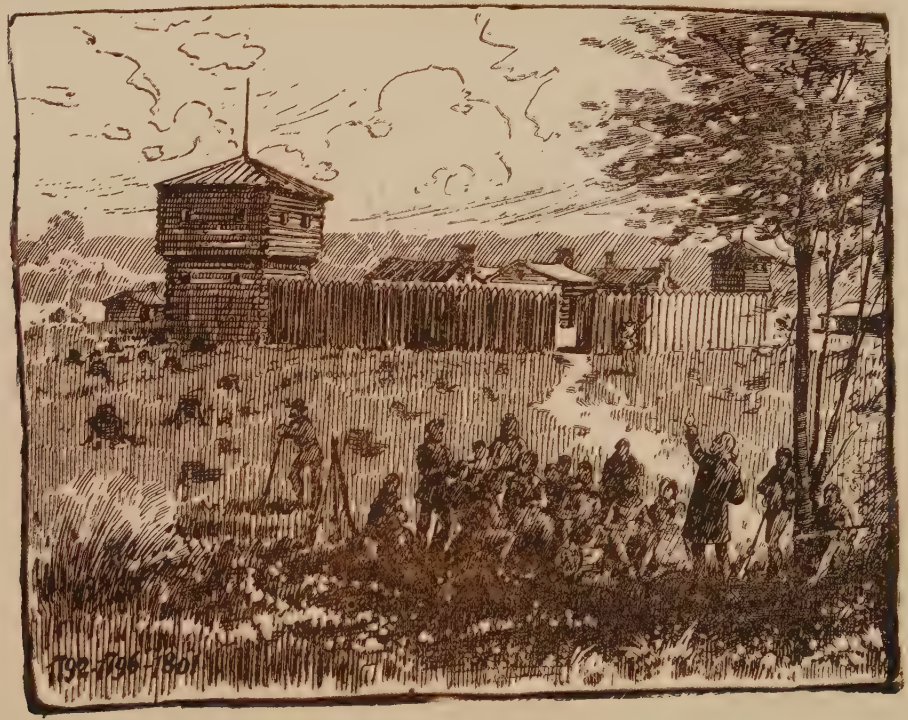
licensed to preach in 1799 by the Presbytery of West Lexington. Coming within the jurisdiction of Washington Presbytery, he was received as a probationer by this body at a meeting at Red Oak in April, 1801. He accepted the call of the Springfield Church for two-thirds of his time, he being a stated supply at Hamilton for the remaining third. The text assigned him for his trial sermon, on October 7th, 1801, was 1 Cor. xvi. 22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." On November 11th, 1801, Presbytery met at Springfield. The minutes best describe the ceremony of ordination and installation: "Presbytery proceeding to the ordination of Mr. Thomson, a sermon suited to the occasion was delivered by Mr. Dunlevy from 2 Peter i. 19, after which Mr. Kemper, the Presiding Bishop, recited in the presence of the people the proceedings of Presbytery relative to the occasion, endeavoring to impress upon their minds the nature and importance of the ordinance, and proposed to Mr. Thomson and the congregation the usual questions, to which they respectively answered in the affirmative. The Presiding Bishop did then, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery, solemnly ordain the said John Thomson to the holy office of the gospel ministry, after which the moderator gave a solemn charge, in the name of God, to the newly ordained Bishop, and to the people, to persevere in

the discharge of their mutual duties, and the whole was concluded with singing and prayer."

The first minister of the Springfield Church was now duly ordained and installed. Associated with him were the elders: John Watson, William Preston, Moses Millar and John McCormick; the latter being ordained May 28th, 1802. The church organization was complete, and the congregation could proceed more efficiently than hitherto with their work.

The erection of a house of worship had been commenced a short time previous to the ordination of the minister. It was located on a lot of two and one-half acres, lying west of the Springfield, Carthage and Hamilton Turnpike, in the northwest quarter of Section 12, of Springfield Township. It was "a large frame building, nearly square, with galleries on the three sides and the pulpit at the north end." To erect a building of the design and proportions as contemplated by the congregation required such a preparation of the lumber that the completion of the house was long delayed because of lack of tools and skilled labor. Such progress was made, however, that the building was used as a place of worship in 1802, and completed about a year afterwards.

The meeting house thus constructed was commensurate with the importance of the church. Springfield, even then, was assuming the pretentious



STOCKADE.

claim of being the most important and prosperous settlement in the valley, and the Springfield congregation was considered by the Presbytery as being, next to the congregation at Cincinnati, the most promising charge under its care.

When the session met on May 30th, 1802, to "ascertain the members of the church," there were seventy-one communicants.* Meetings had been held for two days preceding the numbering of the congregation. Mr. Thomson says of this meeting: "The opinion of the elders was freely expressed that the Lord had blessed my labors the past year. Yet I felt we were not in a lively state, such was our condition when our first communion commenced the last of May, 1802. Nothing was manifest until Monday, when it became evident that God by his Spirit was in the midst of his people in a special manner. The revival was one of great power and continued several months, and at every meeting we were generally greeted with new cases of awakening, and the hopeful conversion of some seeking, longing souls. At the first communion after the revival commenced twenty joined the church, and for a year and a half we had additions at every communion."

The minutes of the session of the church show that thirty-five members were received on October

* See Appendix, *(a)*.

23d, 1802,* and twenty-seven on April 9th of the following year, making a total membership, after deducting those who had died, or withdrawn from the church, of one hundred and twenty-two.

During Mr. Thomson's first pastorate of the church, extending from November 11th, 1801, to August 29th, 1803, he baptized seventy-seven children and six adults. On March 27th, 1803, Thomas McIntire, Abraham Lindley and James Andrews were "ordained to the office of ruling elders." William Preston, one of the first elders, had died some time previous.

The mere inspection of the records indicate that the church at this time was in a healthy state, and enjoying a high degree of prosperity. That the efforts of Thomson had been abundantly fruitful there is no doubt. In his pursuit of the sinner he was indefatigable. By his earnestness and zeal in the pulpit, and the kindness and sympathy displayed while among his congregation, he had entrenched himself in the affections of his flock. They believed in him, and followed him implicitly as their spiritual guide. None knew or probably suspected that, in a few weeks, to follow him would be to desert the Presbyterian Church and to leave it in a state of adversity and helplessness. They did not know that Mr.

* See Appendix, *(b)* and *(c)*.

Thomson was losing faith in the Calvinistic doctrine as a means of saving sinners, and that before autumn he would identify himself with a religious movement that has no parallel in church history.

The Springfield Church was now to undergo an ordeal that would test its fitness to exist.

CHURCH BUILDING ERECTED IN 1802.

CHAPTER II.

THE SECEDERS, 1803—1812.

For a clearer understanding of the cause of this schism in the Springfield Church it is necessary to consider the condition of religious affairs in Ohio, and in the adjacent State of Kentucky, at this time.

At the close of the Revolutionary War infidelity in France had reached its height. Voltaire had determined, in 1728, to destroy Christianity; the fruition of his teachings was such as to strengthen the belief that he would finally succeed. The services of La Fayette and the aid given the Republic by the government of France had engendered in the hearts of the American people a kindly feeling for that country; they were prepared to believe that whatever came from France was good. The wild gales of French skepticism sweeping with irresistible fury across the sea surged over the heights of the Alleghenies and engulfed the pioneers of the Northwest Territory and of Kentucky and Virginia. Thomas Jefferson was then in the zenith of his popularity. He had been some years in attendance at the court of Versailles, and it was the popular belief that the great Jefferson had adopted the infidelity of the French. Opinions, too, were prevalent that many

statesmen and other eminent men had accepted the same views.

To add to the general unbelief, as fuel to a fire already too great, Thomas Paine's "Age of Reason" was published. The ability displayed by Paine as a writer in the days of the Revolution and his identification with the cause of freedom made his writings, in the judgment of many people, worthy of great consideration. With men so learned engaged in its behalf, Infidelity certainly occupied a strong vantage ground. The early settlers in their battle with the forces of nature had little time to investigate these matters for themselves, and readily accepted the views of men so prominent in statesmanship, so eminent in intellect. Had they endeavored to ascertain the truth, it would probably have been found that Thomas Jefferson, although taciturn in respect to religious doctrines, was far from accepting the vagaries and errors of the skeptics.

A critical examination of Paine's "Age of Reason" would have convinced them that however sound his political doctrines might be, yet in religious matters he was clearly illogical, and his views manifestly erroneous.

It is futile to discuss what might have been the condition of the inhabitants of the West had they indulged in a season of serious thought and reflection. War has a demoralizing tendency, even though

the strife be ever so just. This "unhappy concomitant" was evidenced more in the new settlements than at any other place. Moreover, the environment of those who first planted the standard of civilization on the Northwest was not conducive to religious advancement. "The supply of Bibles and pastors was limited, religious privileges were few, and many of the population were as sheep having no shepherd." The result was that, under the combined influence of French Skepticism, the teachings of noted men, and the unwholesome environment incident to new countries, a great proportion of the people of Kentucky and Ohio (the vicinity with which we are concerned) became pronounced Infidels. Thomas Moffit, in a conversation with Dr. James Gallaher, author of the "Western Sketch Book," says: "It was believed that at the commencement of the year 1800 at least one-half of the men and women were avowed disciples of Thomas Paine." "When this was told to Abraham McElroy, the venerable old man replied: 'Say not one-half; say nine-tenths, for thus it was in the region of Lebanon, Kentucky, where I resided, and I myself was among the number.'" This period of spiritual desolation is vividly described in a letter to the *New York Magazine* by Rev. Gideon Blackburn: "About the years '98 and '99 the darkness was thick like that in Egypt, a darkness which might be felt. The few pious in the land were ready to cry out,

'Has God forgotten to be gracious? Are his mercies clean gone? Will he be favorable no more?'"

There is no doubt that there was much unbelief, and sinful living, in the country around Springfield in the first years of the nineteenth century. William Henry Harrison, referring to the same time, spoke disparagingly of the morality of Cincinnati.

There were many instances of discipline in the church of Springfield during the first year of Mr. Thomson's pastorate. At the third meeting of the elders of the first session, an erring member "came before session and confessed that he had been guilty of the crime of drunkenness, professed sincere repentance, was rebuked and restored to his former standing in the church." At the fifth meeting three others were cited to appear before the session to answer the same charge.

The dark clouds of Deism and Infidelity that enveloped the West were dispelled by the fierce light that followed in the wake of the Kentucky Revival, whose origin was as follows:

In the summer of 1799, at Red River, Kentucky, religious services had been held in the church from Friday until Monday. After the sermon on the last day, an elderly lady uttered a loud shout. The congregation suddenly became exceedingly quiet. William McGee and his brother John were present; the former sat down upon the floor, and the latter

began to tremble. John McGee attempted to preach; the people were eager to hear; he became so agitated that his effort failed; he exclaimed that there was a greater than he preaching, and exhorted the people to "let the Lord reign in their hearts"; immediately the awful silence was broken by mingled cries for mercy and shouts of ecstasy. The congregation swayed as trees in the wind. The excitement became intense; the aisles filled with exhorters; some prayed, others sang, while the proprieties of religious worship were disregarded. In their agitation, men, women and children "fell" until the floor was covered.

The news of this remarkable manifestation of what the Rev. McCready and the McGees were pleased to call "God's Spirit" spread like wildfire. A religious fervor seized the whole community. On the Green River and the Cumberland, the Licking, the Miamis and the Ohio the populace flocked to the meetings. The capacity of the churches was inadequate to accommodate the multitudes. Services were held in the forests and "camp-meetings" were introduced. Through the forests, for hundreds of miles, came the worshipers in their wagons, with provisions sufficient to maintain them for weeks. All labor was suspended; the farmer left the harvest in the fields and hastened to partake of the "Bread of Life"; the hunter ceased his wanderings in quest of the deer;

the blasphemer praised God, and the inebriate practiced sobriety.

Camp-meetings, held in every locality of Kentucky and Southern Ohio, followed each other in rapid succession. At every gathering hundreds, and sometimes thousands, would "fall" and remain in a state of stupor for hours. Their breathing became slow, and all the physical faculties were apparently suspended. As the enthusiasm became more intense those who fell would begin to roll. One bodily exercise followed another; the rolls were succeeded by the "jerks." The "jerks" consisted of throwing the head and upper half of the body backward and forward. There seemed to be no limit to these excesses. Congregations would begin to laugh, and at times the "holy laugh" became so vociferous that it could be heard for miles. When the revival was at its height the jerks were accompanied by the "barks." "Forced, as the victims claimed to be, to impersonate a dog, they fell on all fours and barked and snapped and showed their teeth in such a manner as to fill the spectators with horror."

As irrational as all these excesses may appear, they are inexplicable. No one was exempt; the scholar, the poor, ignorant backwoodsman, the saint and the sinner "fell." In their stupor they saw bright visions and dreamed of realms of bliss. They awoke

either in deep despondency because of their sins, or in a state of ecstasy, rejoicing in their salvation. Children, after passing through these experiences, became possessed of remarkable gifts of prayer and exhortation, and their petitions to Almighty God, couched in language so clear in expression and pertinent in its application, have never been explained except on the ground that "their heads were lifted up in the ways of the Lord," and their minds "quickened by the Divine Spirit." Many preachers advised their congregations to stay away from these meetings, and endeavored to explain to them that it was the wildest fantasy of an overheated imagination. Other ministers, as prominent and learned, claimed that it was a direct visitation of God. When the "falling" of five hundred persons, as though cast down by a cannon ball, had been witnesses, who could disbelieve?

Skepticism was now dethroned, and religious frenzy reigned. No human power seemed able to resist the revival in its peculiar course. It must proceed, whether for good or evil, God alone knew. To those who looked on with some misgivings there was one consolation: thousands of men and women were forsaking evil and looking towards God. The ministers of Washington Presbytery viewed with alarm the storm that was raging around the rugged rocks of Calvinism. Soon there were rumors that some

of their own members were preaching contrary to the doctrine of the Confession of Faith. Richard McNemar, a warm friend of Thomson, became involved in a controversy with his church at Cabin Creek, Kentucky, and the pastoral relation was dissolved. It was intimated that the cause of dissatisfaction could be attributed to his sympathy with the irregular methods common among the more enthusiastic ministers of the day.

On the day that John Thomson was ordained by the Presbytery at Springfield as the first minister of that congregation the omens of trouble were present. After the ordination a letter was received from three of the elders of the Cabin Creek Church containing charges against McNemar respecting doctrine. This communication was placed on the minutes. The ministers who were present wisely took no further action, and there was a suspicion that more than half of them sympathized with McNemar in his belief. When the Presbytery met at Cincinnati, in the following October, they adopted resolutions declaring McNemar unsound in doctrine, but for some unknown reason did nothing more in this respect, but appointed him supply at Turtle Creek for half his time.

The crisis in this affair came when Presbytery met at Springfield in April, 1803. A petition was presented praying for "the examination of Rev. Richard

McNemar in the fundamental doctrines of religion," or what the petitioners call Free-Will or Arminian Doctrines, and also "that the Rev. John Thomson undergo a like examination."

The congregation at Springfield was astounded. Thomson had been the means of accomplishing so much good that they would fain believe that the doctrines he advocated could not be erroneous. Their confidence in him was unshaken, and, with the exception of five or six families, all of them accepted what he proclaimed as the truth, notwithstanding the declarations of the regularly constituted authority of the Church at large to the contrary.

Thomson and McNemar were not without sympathizers in the Presbytery itself. Five ministers were present. Of these, John Dunlevy voted with McNemar and Thomson as against Kemper and Wallace. It was declared improper to grant the prayer of the petition and examine Mr. McNemar and Mr. Thomson, as being out of order. They proceeded then to put in the hands of Mr. McNemar a call from Turtle Creek, which he promptly accepted. Mr. Kemper and Mr. Wallace protested strongly against the proceedings, especially in reference to the refusal to examine McNemar and Thomson, and the placing of the call of Turtle Creek in the hands of McNemar. The minutes of this meeting lasting from Wednesday until Monday, are convincing that the ministers

sound in doctrine did what they could to maintain the principles of their Church in the heated controversy with their brethren. If Finley and Campbell had been present to aid Kemper and Wallace, how different would have been the result. The Presbytery now stood four to three in favor of sound doctrine.

A few months after the meeting at Springfield the Synod of Kentucky concluded the review of the proceedings of Washington Presbytery. They found that Richard McNemar had been, after examination, convicted of heresy; that the memorial presented at Springfield to examine McNemar and Thomson should not have been disregarded, and censured the placing of the call of Turtle Creek in McNemar's hands. The Synod then determined to examine McNemar and Thomson and ascertain the truth.

The erring ministers had in the meantime been joined by Rev. Robert Marshall, Rev. Barton W. Stone and John Dunlevy. They entered a protest and denied the jurisdiction of the Synod, after which they withdrew.

The Synod was reluctant to suspend unless all means to reclaim were proved to be of no avail. A committee was sent after the ministers who had left, to reason with them, and persuade them to comply with the discipline of the Church. The committee signally failed in its efforts. The next day the seceders appeared before the Synod and dramatically

repudiated outright the Confession of Faith "and all creeds whatsoever save the Bible." They furthermore informed the Synod that they had, but a few hours since, organized an independent Presbytery, to be known as the "Presbytery of Springfield," and that henceforth they would act irrespective of the dictates of the Synod of Kentucky. After this statement they took leave of the brethren and departed, believing that they possessed common views of the doctrines of religion and the regulations of public worship, little thinking that in a few years each would be left alone to pursue his own peculiar course.

The Synod, after listening to what was deemed a confession of error on the part of the seceders, suspended them severally from the office of the ministry, and declared their pulpits vacant; a saving clause was added, inasmuch as they referred the errorists to their respective Presbyteries, giving them authority to restore the deposed pastors upon repentance.

In the church at Springfield all was confusion. William Robinson had been deputed to convey to the congregation the declaration of the suspension of their pastor. The messenger exhorted them to hold fast to the old doctrines, which the Presbyterian Church had preserved and protected for more than two centuries. He advised them to be calm, exercise their judgment and "study the peace and unity of the Church."

His words fell as the seed upon the rock. Mr. Thomson had been in the midst of his people for four years; he had preached to them before he was ordained as their minister. He had sympathized with them in their misfortunes and rejoiced in their rejoicings. The majority of Presbyterians of the whole country believed him to be true to the cause of religion, and they could not forsake him because of his disbelief in abstruse theological propositions. They had seen many men and women fall and jerk and writhe under the influence of some supernatural agency, and they were willing to sanction the belief of their pastor that God was thus evidencing his awful power in this unusual manner.

After the division, a small number remained to defend the standards of their religion against all assaults and maintain the integrity of the church they had builded in honor of that God whose sovereignty was so strongly set forth in the Confession of Faith. "Their names," says a subsequent pastor, "deserve to be handed down to posterity for the important stand they took in defense of the truth, and for the important aid they rendered the church in the time of her greatest need."

John McCormick, Benjamin Perlee, James Vance and Michael Long, with some others less prominent in church work, "kept the faith." Popular vagaries and irrational bodily contortions did not appeal

strongly to them. They stood firm and immovable until the sky was clear again, and handed down the "name and inheritance which we this day enjoy." Week after week they met in the church and in the absence of a minister engaged alone in the worship of God. The Presbytery tenderly cared for them, and on their application, on October 3d, 1804, for one-half a minister's time for one year, Rev. Matthew G. Waliace was appointed for one-third his time.

Mr. Wallace was the first minister ordained by the Presbytery of Washington. He was installed as pastor of the church at Cincinnati in October, 1800, but this relation continued only for one year. He preached frequently at Springfield until 1807, and was always considered sound in doctrine. Dr. Joshua L. Wilson, pastor of the First Church of Cincinnati for thirty-eight years, preached occasionally to this small gathering of Christians. On the minutes of the meeting of Presbytery in 1810 we find it recorded that he was appointed to preach "two days and administer the Lord's Supper in Springfield"; at the same time Rev. Daniel Hayden was appointed to supply Springfield two days. Mr. Hayden was a young man and a graduate of Jefferson College; he was ordained at Duck Creek on November 10th, 1810, Dr. Wilson preaching the sermon and Rev. Matthew G. Wallace delivering the charge.

From 1803 to 1812 the church experienced but

JOHN THOMSON HOMESTEAD.

little growth; the records of this period, if any were kept at all, have been lost. Because of the tremendous opposition that met them on every side, they could maintain only a defensive position. During this long season of trial their greatest friend, counselor and leader was Rev. James Kemper. Starting from his home on Walnut Hills, seventeen miles distant, following Wayne's trace over the hills, fording the creeks, and driving round fallen trees and the debris of the forest, he traced his way, in summer and in winter, to the congregation at Springfield. His wife and son Charles frequently accompanied him on those drives through the woods, the latter sitting on a small chair that was placed in their rudely constructed conveyance.

CHAPTER III.

DRIFTING, 1803—1805.

While the old church was thus striving to maintain its existence, the opposition blindly acquiescing in the leadership of their deposed pastor, passed onward to apparent success.

That they might proceed more efficiently in their work, it was found to be expedient to adopt some name by which the seceders might be known. On the suggestion of Mr. Thomson, who claimed "That the will of God was made manifest to each individual who honestly sought after it by an inward light which shone in his heart," the name "New Light" was adopted.

To trace the development of the "New Light" Church, which, as we have indicated, was first named by John Thomson at Springfield, is beyond the purpose of this narrative; we shall therefore direct our attention more particularly to its operations in the Springfield community.

When it was found that the old congregation would refuse to identify themselves with the New Lights, as those who seceded were now called, a lively contest arose for the possession of the church building, recently erected. The New Lights were far more

numerous than their more conservative brethren, and it seemed at first that the former would, by the mere force of numbers, vanquish those in possession. The resourceful tactics of the Presbyterians soon put an end to the whole matter. The trustees resolved to entrench themselves behind a legal title. No deed had been executed for the lot upon which the church stood. The land belonged to James McCormick. The organization of the church having been kept intact, McCormick could execute a legal conveyance for the premises. Accordingly on November 20th, 1803, forty-six days after the suspension of Mr. Thomson, a deed was signed by James McCormick for the nominal consideration of fifteen dollars, conveying the premises to "John Watson and John McCormick, Trustees of the Springfield Congregation, and to their successors in office, that may be appointed trustees of the Presbyterian Congregation, known by the name of Springfield Congregation, holding for their form of church government and discipline the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, ratified and adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia May 16th, 1788."

The deed also contained the following covenant on the part of the grantees: "And the said Trustees for themselves and their successors in office do further covenant and agree that no person whatsoever holding any doctrine contrary to the above

recited Directory and Confession of Faith shall, at any time hereafter, preach or exhort any place on the above described premises."

When this deed appeared it was evident to the New Lights that they must cease to contend. It was certain that the title to the premises vested in the legally constituted trustees, and by virtue of the deed they could oust any one who did not accept the doctrine therein set forth.

As Springfield was the most conspicuous community in the New Light movement, Mr. Thomson and his adherents proceeded to erect a house of worship across the road, immediately opposite the old church.

The congregations now assembled in their respective churches for worship at the same hour of the same day. The interest at the New Light Church was intense; hundreds came to the meetings, at which the excitement always ran high. Little heed was paid to the few brave souls across the road who came together quietly and with Puritanic solemnity bowed their heads in prayer. Here were two congregations, one large and one small, both sincere in purpose, and each believing the other to be in error. Each prayed that celestial light might penetrate the clouds that enveloped their benighted brethren.

The success that always crowned the efforts of the New Lights impelled them to devise means by which

they could widen the chasm that divided them from the Presbyterians. John Thomson, at the time he was suspended, said to the Synod that "the Confession of Faith was a means of strengthening sinners in their unbelief, and of subjecting many of the pious to a spirit of bondage." Nine months with these seceders had probably strengthened his opinion, for on June 28th, 1804, we find him, together with the ministers who had founded the Presbytery of Springfield, consenting to the abolishing of all organization, including the office of the eldership, and to the rejection of all creeds. In furtherance of their design to make all churches absolutely independent, the members of this Presbytery dissolved, and made their "Last Will and Testament," one of the most peculiar and nonsensical instruments ever drafted by rational beings. Their so-called "Last Will and Testament" was as follows:

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY.

For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of the testator; for a testament is of force after men are dead, otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone;

but if it die, it bringeth forth fruit. Whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, yet once more, signifies the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, that those things which can not be shaken may remain.— Scripture.

Last Will and Testament, Etc.

The Presbytery of Springfield, sitting at Caneridge, in the county of Bourbon, being, through a gracious Providence, in more than ordinary health, growing in strength and size daily; and in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die, and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make and ordain this our Last Will and Testament, in manner and form following, viz.:

Imprimis. We will, that this body be dissolved, and sink into union with the Body of Christ at large; for there is but one body and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

Item. We will, that our name of distinction, with its Reverend title, be forgotten, that there be but one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one.

Item. We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority, forever cease; that the

people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Item. We will, that candidates for the gospel ministry henceforth study the Holy Scriptures with fervent prayer, and obtain license from God to preach the simple gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, without any mixture of philosophy, vain deceit, traditions of men, or the rudiments of the world. And let none henceforth take this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

Item. We will, that the Church of Christ assume her native right of internal government — try her candidates for the ministry, as to their soundness in the faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach, and admit no other proof of their authority but Christ speaking in them. We will, that the Church of Christ look up to the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into the harvest; and that she resume her primitive right of trying those who say they are Apostles, and are not.

Item. We will, that each particular church, as a body, actuated by the same Spirit, choose her own preacher, and support him by a free will offering, without written call or subscription — admit members — remove offences — and never henceforth delegate her right of government to any man or set of men whatever.

Item. We will, that the people henceforth take

the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they choose; for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.

Item. We will, that preachers and people cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more and dispute less; and while they behold signs of the times, look up, and confidently expect that redemption draweth nigh.

Item. We will, that our weak brethren, who may have been wishing to make the Presbytery of Springfield their King, and wot not what is now become of it, betake themselves to the Rock of Ages, and follow Jesus for the future.

Item. We will, that the Synod of Kentucky examine every member who may be suspected of having departed from the Confession of Faith, and suspend every such suspected heretic immediately, in order that the oppressed may go free, and taste the sweets of gospel liberty.

Item. We will, that Ja— ——, the author of two letters lately published in Lexington, be encouraged in his zeal to destroy partyism — we will, moreover, that our past conduct be examined into by all who may have correct information; but let foreigners beware of speaking evil things which they know not.

Item. Finally, we will, that all our sister bodies

read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late.

SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY. [L. S.]

JUNE 28TH, 1804.

ROBERT MARSHALL,
JOHN DUNLEVY,
RICHARD MCNEMAR,
B. W. STONE,
JOHN THOMSON,
DAVID PURVIANCE,
} Witnesses.

The churches formerly within the jurisdiction of the Springfield Presbytery, which had thus committed suicide, were now free to act irrespective of any authority outside their own bounds. The New Lights aimed at harmony of action and uniform methods of worship, but this could hardly be attained because of the changing views in religious affairs that characterized both the ministers and the whole body of these religious extremists.

The inward light which shone in the heart had not as yet manifested to Mr. Thomson the whole "will of God." He was deeply impressed with the strange manifestations of the Spirit working through convulsive jerking and fallings. He soon became convinced that if, under the working of the Spirit, these phenomena were involuntary, then, even when the Spirit was not present, it was proper and right to

indulge in these exercises. In this respect his opinion was at variance with that of his clerical brethren. McNemar at this time opposed any voluntary exercises, but in a short while he went far beyond anything that Thomson had advocated. Thomson was an earnest and helpful aid to McNemar at Turtle Creek, and the ministers on all important occasions were together.

The ground of belief of Thomson's involuntary worship was that Christians should show the inworking of the Spirit by bodily manifestations, and that it was displeasing to Jehovah to "drag them into it." He believed that when the voluntary service became "full of unbelief and sin" that it was then that the greatness and glory of a supernatural power was displayed. Because of the schism now created in the New Light Church, Thomson and his followers lost their identity as New Lights and became known, more properly speaking, as "Schismatics."

The friendly relations between McNemar and Thomson were not dissolved by reason of this mere difference of opinion. Thomson had always been aggressive in the fight against the hosts of Satan. McNemar might well believe that the "inner light" had revealed to Thomson matters with which the Spirit had not enlightened him. Both were drifting with the tide, neither certain of his destination. McNemar was approaching a harbor in which he

could soon anchor and find rest the remainder of his days, but Thomson was to be tossed for years on the waves of doubt and uncertainty, cheered, it is true, by the tender love of his congregation, but racked within by misgivings as to his interpretation of the "will of God."

In the spring of 1804 we find Thomson at Turtle Creek assisting the scholarly McNemar in the services of the Sacrament. As the end of the services drew near, Thomson, always conscientious and devout, and profoundly impressed with the spiritual significance of the sacred ordinance of the breaking of bread and the pouring of wine, which he had just aided in administering, could not restrain himself, and, in accordance with his professed belief, began to dance around the table, repeating in a low tone of voice, "This is the Holy Ghost; Glory!" He continued in this manner for more than an hour, the congregation uniting with him and altogether rejoicing, like David of old, in the Lord of their salvation. It is not strange that these religionists thus initiated in the holy dance should readily accept the doctrines of the exponents of a new religion, who now appeared on the scene.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHAKERS, 1805.

When, in September, 1803, the dissenting ministers withdrew from the Presbyterian Church, they published "An Apology for renouncing the jurisdiction of the Synod of Kentucky." In this pamphlet it plainly appears that the ministers expected that the day of the second coming of Christ was at hand. How He would reveal Himself was not yet clear to them. Their design in constituting themselves into the Presbytery of Springfield was "to cover the truth from the impending storm and check the lawless career of imposition." "They proceeded to organize what they called churches, although they considered their existence as only *pro tempore* — a kind of asylum for those who were cast out; that they might come forth and be there, like David's father and mother, with the king of Moab, until they would know what God would do for them." In a letter to the Synod, signed by Marshall, Dunlevy, Stone and Thomson, they say: "Then will Zion shake herself from the dust, shine forth as the sun in his brightness and be terrible as an army with banners. Then shall she be a cup of trembling to all the people round about her, and shake terribly the nation. Then shall the man

of sin be destroyed and righteousness shall flow down as a mighty stream. These things, dear brethren, are not vain imaginations, for God is now about to take the earth."

McNemar says: "At least those who were foremost in the schism expected beyond a doubt that another summer would not roll by with any degree of the light, gifts and power of God short of that which bringeth full and complete salvation from all sin."

The Springfield Presbytery exercised some of the prerogatives of the old-line Presbyteries, and in March, 1804, licensed Malcolm Worley as a public teacher of the Word. After existing nine months the members considered their purpose accomplished, and in the Last Will and Testament "resigned their supposed authority." All now waited with more or less credulity for some marvelous manifestation of the Spirit. The expectations of some were realized; the others finally awoke as from a dream and cast off what they termed "the spell of error."

In the early spring of 1805 three travelers crossed the river at Cincinnati and disappeared in the Ohio woods. Like the followers of George Fox, they wore broad-brimmed hats; their general appearance indicated that they had been exposed to the rigor of an inclement winter in the forests. On the first day of the preceding January, John Meacham, Issachar

Bates and Benjamin S. Youngs had started on foot on a missionary tour from New Lebanon, New York. After a journey full of peril and hardship they arrived in Kentucky and visited the localities where religious enthusiasm still ran high, in the hope that they might be able to impress their doctrine on the susceptible hearts of those who were so keenly sensitive to every religious influence. They were kindly received and entertained, but it was apparent that the "Shakers," or, as they called themselves, the "Agents of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Coming," could obtain no foothold in Kentucky.

The fame of Thomson had reached them, and immediately they turned their steps toward Springfield, and were soon housed under the hospitable roof of him who had given the New Lights a name. If the "Shakers" knew of the dancing of Thomson, they no doubt felt assured that he would become a ready convert and accept their views without hesitation. In advocating new methods of worship he had gone far beyond his brethren who had severed their connection with the Presbyterian Church. Then, again, Thomson was a man of influence and power, "a giant in Israel." With his aid, the banner of Shakerism could be raised aloft with the assurance that multitudes would assemble to enroll under its folds.

If the missionaries harbored ideas of this char-

acter, they were destined to suffer disappointment. While the dancing that characterized the Shakers could probably have been approved by Thomson, yet their fundamental tenets were of such a nature that he considered them not only contrary to the Scriptures, but subversive of the doctrine of Christianity.

He listened intently as the missionaries read to him the letter from their church. They declared that "they were living witnesses of God, to open and confirm to the people that way and only way out of sin, that complete salvation, which they themselves had found, and that everlasting life and glory of which the church in that place (New Lebanon) were in possession."

After hearing the principles of this "new religion" expounded, Thomson refused to accept them. His course had been erratic, and he had passed rapidly from one position to another, but at last he determined to go no further. As we study his life we can not but discern an undercurrent of serious thought. He did not repudiate the basic truths of the Confession of Faith, other than those which pertained to the formal manner and methods of worship. The tenets promulgated by Ann Lee found no place in his creed, and in his refusal to embrace them he was consistent with his professions.

Meacham and his companions, depressed in spirit, and with disconsolate hearts, again took up their jour-

ney. Threading their way through the forest, they passed onward toward the east, about two miles, to an elevation known by the Indians as the High Hill. Is it a fancy of the imagination to believe that as the disciples of Ann Lee emanated from the woods and beheld for the first time the beautiful valley of the Maketewa, they paused to worship and to admire?

The fetters of winter had been broken and the tender buds of the trees were pushing through their soft, velvety coverings. The dogwood, gayly attired, filled the air with delectable odors. Among the blossoms of the redbud and hawthorn the early songsters were building their nests. Clad in robes of delicate hues, the flowers of spring were shyly peeping from beneath the dead leaves that lay deep on the virgin soil. Before the wanderers a vast wilderness, dark and silent as the grave, covered the lowlands and the hills beyond, save the summit of Mount Chapultepec, an Indian mound, which lay bare and desolate, four miles towards the rising sun.

The interminable solitudes stretched toward the north until they met the horizon, while on the south the view was abruptly broken by the heights of Mount Pierpont, where in subsequent years John Van Zant secreted the fugitive Eliza. Descending into the valley, the missionaries passed round the mound where Wayne's army had had a skirmish with the Indians, and climbing the hill two miles farther east,

reached the road made by General Harmar in 1791, and in a few hours were at the settlement of Turtle Creek.

Here they were housed with Malcolm Worley, and on the following day were ushered into the presence of a tall, gaunt, clerical-looking man, whose keen eyes glared beneath a brow that betokened intelligence and deep thought. It was the Rev. John McNemar, the classical scholar and linguist, the minister of the erstwhile Turtle Creek Presbyterian Church, now the exponent of the New Lights.

As they revealed the object and purpose of their visit he became interested. Unlike Thomson, he had completely eradicated Presbyterianism from his creed, and might, therefore, consistently unite with the "Shakers." On the succeeding Sabbath they were given permission to preach in the church. Worley was converted, and a short time afterward McNemar and nearly all the congregation became members of the United Society, and the foundations of Union Shaker Village were laid.

Rev. John Dunlevy, the stanch friend of Thomson and McNemar and the pastor of the Eagle Creek Church, became a member of the organization, and his congregation soon followed him. The ranks were augmented, too, by the members of the Orangedale Church.

McNemar believed the missionaries to be the true

witnesses of Christ's second advent. He was ready to believe that these men were the bearers of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and that their arrival was the fulfillment of prophecy. The following poem, of which he is the author, fairly sets forth his ideas concerning the purpose of the Springfield Presbytery and the mission of the "Shakers":

"Five preachers formed a body, in eighteen hundred three,
From Antichrist's false system to set the people free;
His doctrine and his worship in pieces they did tear—
But ere the scene was ended these men became a snare.

"As witnesses for Jesus they labored night and day
To convince the blinded Pharisees that Christ was on his way;
But souls bound for the kingdom did strangely turn aside,
And for a little season took these to be their guide.

"The word of God came unto them in eighteen hundred four:
'Your work is now completed; you're called to do no more;
My kingdom soon must enter, I can not long delay;
And in your present order you're standing in my way.'

"These preachers took the warning, and all with one accord
Agreed such institutions must fall before the Lord;
And wisely they consented to take their righteous doom,
To die and be dissolved, to make the Savior room.

"In their last will and testament they publish'd a decree,
For Christ-ians in Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee
To meet the next October and swell the solemn prayer:
'Thy kingdom come, Lord Jesus; thy kingdom enter here.'

"The meeting was observed, the solemn prayer was made;
We waited for an answer, which was not long delayed;
The precious seed of Canaan, long growing in the East,
Was planted in Ohio ere the next April feast.

"The long expected kingdom at length began to spring,
Which to many has appeared a strange, mysterious thing;
But we'll trace it through the summer, the hottest scene of all,
And try to find its fruit in the next ensuing fall."

John Dunlevy, the second minister who became identified with the Shakers, held views that coincided with McNemar's. He says: "The year 1805 was marked by the arrival of three missionaries from New Lebanon, in the State of New York, who bore testimony to these preachers and their people, that they were commissioned and sent from the church at New Lebanon to announce to them the commencement of Christ's kingdom on earth, and that they were living witnesses to it — that Christ had come to make an end of sin, and having everlasting righteousness, that all who were desirous to find the way of life and salvation were now called to deny themselves of all ungodliness and every worldly lust and take up a daily cross and follow Christ in regeneration." *

Thomson viewed with alarm the spread of Shakerism, and opposed, openly, the extension of the propaganda of the missionaries. Worley's defection was not surprising, as he had been preaching doctrines in which some of the Schismatics did not concur. The case of McNemar was more important. In a letter written to him by Thomson on April 5th, 1805, the latter says: "It matters not to me who they are who are the devil's tools, whether men or angels,

* "The Manifesto; or, A Declaration of the Doctrine and Practice of the Church of Christ," by John Dunlevy.

good men or bad. In the strength of God I mean not to spare. I used lenity once to the devil because he came in a good man, Worley. But my God respects no man's person. I would they were even cut off who trouble you. I mean in the name and strength of God to lift his rod of almighty truth against the viper. I see the work of the beast on that church as plain as I see this paper while I write; and I know that I see it by the light of God. God in mercy visited your soul with light while I remained in darkness; he sent you to this country with the light to sow it here, and made you the instrument of bringing the heavenly fire to Springfield, where my soul caught the flame of this revival. Ever since that time you are in my heart, to live and to die with you." * Three weeks later he went to Turtle Creek, investigated publicly the doctrine of the missionaries, and at the close of the inquiry violently denounced them.

McNemar, in reply to Thomson's invectives, charged him with inconsistency, and called his attention to a statement in the "Christian Plan of Church Government," to which he had given his approval: "Let none be excommunicated but for a breach of the divine law."

At a meeting at Salem, Thomson refused to

* *Vide* "Kentucky Revival," by McNemar.

permit McNemar to speak, and again passionately condemned both the missionaries and their creed. Rev. Barton Stone, too, became a strong opponent of the Shakers. He had requested McNemar to be present at a general meeting to be held at Salem. The latter complied with the request, accompanied by Dunlevy, Young and Worley. Stone thereupon refused to permit any of them to speak. On the last day of the meeting Thomson, Stone, Marshall, Purviance, Stockwell and Brannon delivered addresses full of fire and invective.

McNemar and Dunlevy, sincere and earnest in their belief, could not be overcome. Both of them published books vindicating their adopted church of the aspersions that they considered had been cast upon it by Thomson, Stone, Marshall and other Schismatic ministers. The Muse again came to the aid of McNemar, when he wrote of Stone:

"Brother, cast your anger off,
And every passion bury;
Come in and share the fatted calf,
And let us all be merry.

"Will you grieve about a kid
When the calf is killed?
If you come in when you are bid,
You may yet be filled."

The Shaker settlement prospered and soon became a thriving community, owning several hundred acres of land, with imposing buildings and valuable improvements.

Having accepted the Shaker faith as the rule and guide of their conduct, both McNemar and Dunlevy strictly adhered, during the remainder of their days, to the teachings of their adopted religion. It is said, "They were very reliable and valuable members of the Society." Dunlevy died in 1826 and McNemar in 1839.

One of the diverse currents of religious thought that originated in the Kentucky revival had borne two Presbyterian ministers to their destination in the harbor of the Shakers. The others were to drift for a while in another direction, and at last be cast upon the rock they had once forsaken.

The course of small communities as well as of nations is frequently directed by events insignificant in themselves, but rich in results. An act, a word, of little consequence in itself, originates a force that leaves its impress on the thought of the locality upon which it operates. It is not a mere conjecture that in the spring of 1805, when the Shakers found rest under the friendly roof of John Thomson, the Mill-creek Valley was held for Presbyterianism and kindred denominations.

Had Thomson, like his fellow ministers and co-

laborers, been won over to Shakerism by the arguments and importunities of Bates and his brethren, his congregation would have followed him. In that event Union Shaker Village would have been founded at Springfield, and thousands of acres of land surrounding the town passed under a common ownership.

The desertion of the homes and the establishment of a community in which men and women live apart, meeting only at the table or to engage in the formal dance, an essential feature of their worship, could not but have prevented all progress, either material or spiritual.

These considerations but emphasize the importance of Thomson's attitude toward the Shakers. His future efforts to heal the wound he had inflicted on the Church of Christ are not more deserving of commendation than his refusal to wholly forsake the truth as expounded by Calvin and to embrace what he termed an "invading heresy."

His stand in some measure explains his subsequent change of mind and conduct. He refused to take the fatal step that would have separated him forever from the Church of his youth, but, for the present, he indulged in practices that were considered by the Presbyterian clergy not less fanatical and heretical than that of the followers of Ann Lee.

CHAPTER V.

THE RETURN TO THE FOLD, 1805—1832.

For more than three years succeeding this time a continuous carnival of religious enthusiasm, bordering at times upon fanaticism, was held in Springfield.

The affairs of the farm, the shop and the bench were forsaken to attend to the duties demanded by the church.

The New Lights never had a dearth of attendance. Far into the winter nights the sound of song, of shouts and of barking broke the stillness; while above all was heard the regular step of the dance, accompanied by the words, "This is the glory of God," sung in a monotone by all the congregation except those who had "fell" and were lying on the floor in rows like patients in an army hospital.

In summer the capacity of the church building was not sufficient to accommodate the increasing attendance; then they assembled in the forest about one-half mile east of the present church edifice, known until recently as Hilt's woods. Let us stand on the outskirts of the clearing and look for a while on the strange scene.

A multitude have assembled beneath the trees; the lights flickering from receptacles attached to the

trees fall on the faces of the devotees. As they look up towards the preacher standing on a rudely constructed platform, a startling paleness is apparent. Apart from the main body and standing in the shadows are those who have come to scoff, to revile, and to create a disturbance. The speaker has been exhorting for more than an hour; his auditors, like Indians at a council meeting, are irresponsive to his earnest appeals save for an occasional grunt or groan of approval. His remarks are now confined to a vivid description of the torments of the lost and the horrors of hell. His discourse is interrupted by a child, who, filled with the spirit, begins to exhort and to pray in language so foreign to children as to convince the congregation that it is the veritable voice of God. A great shout rends the air, and its reverberations echo through the wilderness.

A hundred converts fall under some mysterious influence. They begin to roll, and soon are in the shadows of the woods; a hundred more begin to jerk, and, unable to restrain themselves, catch at saplings and cling to them as a drowning man to a rope. The hair of women becomes disheveled and cracks like the whip of a teamster. Soon the sound of barking dogs is heard in the midst of this rolling and jerking mass of people; it is another manifestation of the spirit, and one more affected than the others runs, like one of the canine tribe, to a tree, and partly

barking and partly speaking, declares he has "treed the Devil."

The scoffers and the revilers and the disturbers of the peace, overcome with awe and terror, fall in a state of stupor, and rising, either shout for joy, or cry for help to extricate themselves from the clutches of Satan. Above the praying and the singing, the exhorting and the barking, the words of Thomson ring clear and strong, "Let God reign." The tumult continues until the lights expire; a somber gloom succeeds; spiritual exaltation can be sustained indefinitely, but of physical endurance there must be an end. Some who had "fell" arose; others, still unconscious, are placed in the wagons, and the journey homeward begins. When the cabin is reached the first rays of the morning sun are mingling with the foliage of the tree tops.

Assemblies of this character were not peculiar to the vicinity of Springfield. The tide of the revival ran highest in Kentucky, Tennessee and Southern Ohio. In these localities meetings were held rivaling in intensity those over which Thomson presided.

In a few years the tide began to ebb and the enthusiasm to wane; the purposes of the revival had been accomplished. Where before the year 1800 the darkness of Unbelief had enveloped the masses like a pall, the light of Truth now fell on the multitudes kneeling at the Cross.

Clergymen have discussed the revival from theological and psychological view-points. Some have considered the exercises incident to it as indicia of the wildest fanaticism; none, however, can gainsay that the hosts of Satan were not routed and the Northwest reclaimed for the Master.

Thomson shared in the general belief that less strenuous means might be as effective for good as those adopted in previous years. He began to consider again the tenets of the Presbyterian Church, and in the light of his great experience outside her folds he arrived at the conclusion that, after all, the means of grace as afforded by his whilom Church, stern, rigid and cold as they might appear, were more efficacious in bringing sinners to repentance and leaving a lasting and more enduring impression on the heart than those which appealed to the emotions and not to the reason.

His congregation, as usual, concurred in his opinion. It may be that in former years they had often had a longing to mingle with the handful of steadfast believers that met in the old church across the road. The prospect of being, once again, established on the rock of Calvinism filled their souls with gladness. They gave their hearty approval when Thomson, whom they could not forsake, appeared before the Synod of Kentucky, at Lexington, on October 9,

1811, and requested to be restored to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church.

The Synod, being fully advised of his change of heart and the sincerity of his purpose, as well as of his conduct during the preceding years, expressed their willingness to receive him, and ordered the Presbytery of Miami, in the territory of which the Springfield Church was then located, to restore him "if the way be open."

Accordingly on the 22d of November, 1811, Rev. John Thomson again became a minister of the Church from which eight years before he had withdrawn. In the summer preceding the fall of 1811 he had convinced the members of the old congregation that he had experienced a change of heart; his conduct during the winter restored him to their favor. In 1812 he accepted a call to become their pastor, and was installed the second time as their spiritual leader and adviser.

A spirit of harmony and good-will now prevailed. When the influence of Thomson was withdrawn, the New Light structure tottered and fell; none were buried beneath its ruins, for all had taken warning and abandoned it at the instance of their leader. Forgetting the asperities of former days, the seceders united with their less erratic brethren in placing the church on a solid basis. No records had been kept. Thomson and the elders proceeded to reorganize the

session and ascertain who could be considered as members in good standing.

The next fifteen years was a period of great growth and prosperity. The church battled courageously with the Powers of Darkness. The session, in the exercise of its functions as an ecclesiastical court, sustained its influence and dignity by dealing summarily with every dereliction of duty on the part of the members of the congregation.

The greatest evil with which the church was obliged to combat was that of drunkenness. In the early settlements the use of whisky was universally prevalent. It was taken to prevent disease and again to effect a cure. It was an indispensable stimulant in time of difficulty and danger. The jug was the cheerful companion of the woodsman and the flask of the fiery fluid a necessary article at barn-raisings and husking bees. When the dead were laid away in the grave beside the church, the mourners returned to their homes and allayed their grief with a friendly draught.

Some of the session, as well as Thomson himself, could remember the havoc created by the drug in the infant settlement at Ft. Washington. The origin of half the hardships of the pioneers could be traced to its use.

That the church would be compromised unless its

evil influences were eradicated was apparent; therefore a strict discipline was enforced. Before 1828 there had been nineteen trials for the offense of drunkenness, as well as numerous citations issued to offenders, who in obedience thereof came before the session, confessed their guilt, pleaded repentance, were reprimanded, and thus escaped suspension.

The session rigidly enforced all the regulations of the church. No one was permitted to neglect the duties incident to his profession. Thus the high standard and the purity of the church was preserved. It had done much before 1828 towards establishing a high standard of morality and purity throughout the valley. It was the most pleasing period of its history; within the next five years it was to share in the rich fruits of a revival, led by Dr. James Gallaher, of Tennessee.

It is recorded in the minutes of the session that a meeting, beginning on July 18, 1828, and ending July 21, was held at Reading, Ohio. At that time the "United Sessions of Springfield, Pleasant Ridge, Hopewell and Reading publickly received twenty-six persons as members of the church." Meetings were held frequently at Reading, Mount Pleasant, Montgomery and Pleasant Ridge. Within the next few months there were one hundred and twenty-two accessions to the membership.

The Minutes of the General Assembly of 1828 report one hundred and sixty-two persons added on profession of their faith.

The church never again experienced so great and rich a revival. The meetings attracted a multitude from distant places — the only similarity they bore to the revival meetings of the first decade of the century.

Dr. Gallaher reports a meeting held in 1832 in Hageman's Grove, at Sharon, that numbered more than two thousand. Father Thomson, so called by his brethren, was present. It was here that Dr. Gallaher quelled an embryo disturbance by rising in the midst of the congregation and stating that he had evidence in his pocket to convict one who was present, and endeavoring to break up the meeting, of being a robber, a thief and a liar. *

The leader of the band of young men who had come from Oxford for the express purpose of routing the revivalists was standing with his companions near a sugar tree. Convicted in his own mind that in a spiritual sense he was guilty of all the crimes that Dr. Gallaher was charging, he sat down trembling and waited for his name to be called.

Dr. Gallaher then stated that the proof to which he referred was "contained in the New Testament, and the name of the disorderly and troublesome

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* *Vide* Western Sketch Book.

individual the Devil." The deep, long respiration, denoting that the burden was gone, could be distinctly heard from the pulpit, and from many in the crowd."

The young man who was so greatly agitated afterwards became a minister of the Gospel. Speaking to Dr. Gallaher of the incident nine years later, he said: "Never was I more relieved than when told that the offender was the devil; and never was I better pleased than when I found nothing more required of me than to keep my seat, and keep quiet and listen to a good sermon."

The pastorate of the venerable Thomson was nearing its close. Only the scars of former strife remained. The answering of his fervent prayers that the church might be the refuge and the hope of those among whom he had labored for so many years, and who had always showered on him their benedictions, seemed imminent. When in 1832 his pastorate ended, the indications were that soon the whole valley would kneel at the foot of the cross and the kingdom of Christ be indeed established on the earth.

He had passed through various grades of religious experience, and had seen many manifestations of the influence of the Spirit, both on the body and the mind. His long and at first erratic pastorate had given him

ample opportunity to examine and carefully test the best methods and means of worshiping God.

The result of his labor in the Presbyterian Church from 1812 to 1832, when compared with that which he accomplished outside the Church from 1803 to 1812, strengthens the belief in the surpassing efficacy of the Calvinistic methods of religious worship.

It is true that the Kentucky Revival, and in connection therewith, the New Light Church, destroyed the barriers of Deism and Infidelity, and notwithstanding the extravagant and inexplicable physical and mental operations incident to their worship, led thousands to the Fountain of Life. That the methods adopted by the leaders of the revival were effectual for the time being there is no doubt; yet, like the spasmodic, irrational and extravagant outbursts of enthusiasm in other fields of thought and action, the influence for good was transient. McNemar might believe, like the Jesuits, who, in a spirit of self-abnegation, planted the seeds of Romanism on the banks of the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes, in visions and in dreams, and, with childlike credulity, write of converts seeing two suns, three moons, a great platform of stars at noonday, "a certain spot of ground illuminated all over with the brightness of burning fire and thousands of human creatures flocking into it from all quarters and instantly purified from all effects of a gross and fleshy nature," as well

as of other equally strange visions. Yet a church built upon these phenomena has a foundation of sand. It may stand for a while, but with the first wind it falls. It was such in this instance. It requires more sober and rational means to secure a permanent conversion, and there is no better proof that the participants in the revival thought that the dreams and visions were the product of a diseased imagination than that all, with few exceptions, returned, like the prodigal son, to their old home in the Presbyterian Church.

In a few years after 1812 the revival exercises were forgotten, and nothing remained to remind the seceding members of the Springfield Church of the days outside the fold, save an elderly woman, who, always dressed in black, would invariably, at the close of the sermon, utter a shriek, and, rushing toward the pastor, fall prostrate before the pulpit.

Revivals are beneficial, and may be the means by which the mind is directed toward God; but when the leaders and the advocates of revivals appeal only to the sentiments and the emotions, and indulge in practices not sanctioned by sound judgment, then their labor will be deficient in permanent results. This is clearly illustrated by the history of the Springfield Church. After the return of Thomson and before 1828 no revivals were held. There had been frequent accessions to the church, and few, if any, had strayed

from the paths of piety and peace. At the close of the revival in 1833 it was found that the church had three hundred members enlisted on its rolls, but of these it is said a large number had never been seen, and the session knew nothing of them. Others came before the session and asked that their names be erased from the church register, admitting that when they were induced to become members, they were agitated and excited, and therefore "they ought not to be recognized as Christians."

It was found to be necessary to revise the roll of membership and place the church on a more substantial basis. Rev. John Thomson's successor was well qualified to lead in this movement.

Church Building Erected in 1833.

CHAPTER VI.

REV. ADRIAN ATEN AND HIS SUCCESSOR.
1832—1848.

Rev. Adrian Aten began to preach at Springfield in October, 1833, the pulpit in the interval having been supplied by Rev. Benjamin Graves, Rev. Sayers Gazley and Rev. William Graham. On the 22d of March, 1834, John Gaston, clerk of the session, made the following record on the minutes:

"According to previous notice, the congregation met for the purpose of electing a pastor; the Rev. Francis Monfort, who had been invited to assist them in conducting the election, being present, after sermon, proceeded to take the votes of the electors of this congregation for a pastor. The Rev. Adrian Aten was nominated and unanimously elected. By a public vote of the congregation the Elders and Trustees were appointed to subscribe the call in their behalf.

"On Friday, May the eleventh, Rev. Adrian Aten was installed as pastor; Rev. J. Burtt preached the sermon, Rev. J. L. Wilson, D.D., presided and gave the charge to the pastor, and Rev. F. Monfort gave the charge to the people."

The old church in the graveyard had been abandoned and a new structure was being erected on a lot within the present limits of the town of Springdale. It was on Saturday, the 11th of November, 1834, that Mr. Aten, standing behind a carpenter's bench, preached the first sermon in the unfinished building from the text: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts." The next day the Sacrament was administered at the same place, but the congregation for some time thereafter worshiped in a log schoolhouse a few rods north of the church.

The members of the session were: James Vance, Benj. Perlee, John Gaston and John Blackburn. These brethren, together with the minister, now began to pursue with vigor the policy that had been instituted some time before. The day after Aten was installed a prominent member appeared before them to show cause why he had "absented himself from the means of grace." He maue satisfactory acknowledgment of his delinquency and was excused, but those in whose hands the government was intrusted warned him that the rules and regulations would be enforced. As evidence of their intention to uphold the Calvinistic doctrines they unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"1. *Resolved*, That the session do cordially approve of the Act and Testimony drawn up and signed by several ministers and elders convened in

Philadelphia, May twenty-seventh, 1834. That we do hereby adopt that Act and Testimony as our own and pledge our firm attachment and adherence to the principle therein contained."

That it might be definitely known over whom the session had jurisdiction, the revision of the church roll was taken up, with the result that more than one hundred and fifty names were erased, leaving about one hundred and fifty in good standing. The elders, Benjamin Perlee and James Vance, had been members of the session from the beginning. They well remembered the evils that befell the New Light Church because of a loose discipline, and with their brethren they shared in the belief that they were building a bulwark around Presbyterianism that would protect it from all assaults. All the elders were men of exceptional strength of character and ability, firm in their convictions, and perhaps in a slight degree dogmatic and arbitrary in defense of their belief. In 1836 the church government received additional strength in the person of Mr. Charles A. B. Kemper, who was in all things in harmony with the elders and the congregation. He was the son of the founder of the church, Rev. James Kemper, who had always kept in close touch with all matters that pertained to Springfield.

Like his father, Mr. Kemper had a well defined conception of his duty as a member of the Church of

Christ; sickness alone prevented his being present at the weekly services or the meetings of the session. He was clerk of the session for twenty-five years, and the records fail to disclose a single absence; he was almost invariably chosen as the representative to the Presbytery or Synod; he was a type and exemplar of the faith with which he was identified. With the exception of that noble pioneer and Christian gentleman, Benjamin Perlee, no one adhered so tenaciously to the orthodox doctrines or better exemplified their teachings by his life and conduct.

After numerous trials, sometimes resulting in suspension and sometimes in admonitions and reprimands by the minister or some one delegated for the purpose, a spirit of disaffection arose. A "social draught" of whisky and occasional absence from worship were thought by many to be no serious offenses; others considered the elders as maintaining a system of espionage that interfered with their personal rights.

No one censured the minister or elders, but believed that they were following the spirit and the letter of the Confession of Faith, many of the provisions of which, in their judgment, were too stern and severe.

In 1837 every church in the Miami Valley, as well as in the whole land, had members with like sentiments and opinions. The whole matter culminated

in the unhappy controversy that resulted in a division of the Presbyterian Church; the party who adhered to the severe Calvinism were denominated the Old School, and the other party, who advocated a doctrine that almost, if not quite, inculcated Arminianism, were called New School Presbyterians.

Mr. Aten, in a letter to a subsequent pastor of the church, declared that Springfield "had her full share" in the discussion, and the records of the session during his pastorate corroborate the statement.

It might appear that the pastorate of Aten was characterized by dissension and strife, but it was far from being such. There are no records of any revivals, but fifty members were added to the church. The minister was popular, and a host of friends bade him Godspeed when, on April 1, 1841, his relation as pastor ceased. He had been with the Springfield congregation seven years and six months; during that time he preached ten hundred and fifty-one sermons, solemnized sixty-four marriages, attended one hundred and six funerals, besides making addresses on various topics. It is admitted that he built up the church, and in so doing extended his influence to such a degree that, like his predecessor Thomson, he had a number of friends and admirers who looked to him alone for advice pertaining to spiritual and temporal affairs.

Subsequent events tested the sincerity of his followers, and they were not found lacking.

As the church was now without a regular pastor, Rev. D. H. McDonald, in the following June, in accordance with the direction of the Presbytery, dispensed the Lord's Supper. On September 3d Rev. Jared M. Stone, a member of the Presbytery of Oxford, officiated in the same capacity, having been employed as stated supply. When Mr. Stone entered upon his work in the church, all was harmony and peace, save for the discussion that began in 1837. The church government wisely concluded to take no judicial notice of the belief of the members in this respect. When it was ascertained that a New School advocate had so far departed from the true faith that he could not be reckoned as a Calvinist, his name was stricken from the roll with no comments.

This subsequently gave rise to some confusion; "absence from the means of grace" being an offense which could not be condoned, the session were unable to determine the members over whom it might have jurisdiction. In December, 1845, committees were appointed to visit seven absentees. Some of those with whom the committees conversed, when asked as to the cause of their not attending the church services, were evasive in their answers; others pleaded sickness, and "besides they had scruples as to the

Confession of Faith." While one or two promised to be more attentive to church obligations, the majority expressed no desire to resume their former relations with the church.

The next meeting discloses the manner in which these cases were disposed of:

"A member of session represented that the case of ———— was of a peculiar character; that he had absented himself from the duties and privileges of the church ever since the difficulties in the church with the (so-called) New School party, and that he probably left on account of his sympathies with that party; whereupon a committee of two, consisting of Stone and Rusk, was appointed to examine into all the circumstances of the case and to bring in a report adapted to it. * * * After recess the committee reported the following, viz.: 'That during the time of the controversies and division between the Old and New School parties in the Presbyterian Church, several individuals, members of the church, withdrew from it on the ground of having adopted the New School sentiments, or on account of their having sided with that party. The names of such persons, as they became known to the session, were simply erased from the list of members. It appears that Mr. ——— withdrew from the church about the same time with those alluded to above, and for similar

reasons. But, by neglect or oversight, his name was suffered to remain on the church books. In this view of the case the committee recommends that the name of ———————— be erased from the list of members and no further action be taken in the case.' "

The policy of the session in the controversy between the Old and New School parties was wise and just. The church lost a number of its members; otherwise the discussion had no baneful effect. The session was always ready and willing to reinstate those who so desired. Letters of dismission from New School churches were recognized, and the brethren of opposing opinions dwelt in unity and in peace.

During the period of this contention the church had been prospering. Early in 1843 a revival had added thirty-four names to the rolls, and the membership was steadily increasing. Five years had passed since the elders had convened to try a case. The session deemed it expedient to admonish the disorderly in private, thus preventing the criticism and ill-feeling that church trials generate. It would have been well had they continued in their mild and pacific course, and had they done so, many of the evils that afflicted the church in the next few years might have been averted.

In 1846 a communicant, after trial, was suspended for drunkenness; the same sentence was imposed upon

another for slander. A committee was appointed to call on some elderly women who resided several miles from the church, "to ascertain the cause of their neglecting the means of grace." This action of the elders was heartily condemned by the congregation. In the same year several names were erased from the register, among which was that of a prominent judge, who had become enamored with the teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg. The frequency with which trial succeeded trial resulted in lessening the influence of both pastor and session.

The preferring of charges against one of his flock by the minister himself exonerated the latter, but left the church weaker. Another investigation, at which the parties contended for days, marked the close of Mr. Stone's pastorate.

Because of its own inherent weakness, caused by too severe an enforcement of ecclesiastical law, and the apparent want of kind consideration on the part of the session for the opinions of others, the church was illy prepared to withstand the storm which in 1848 broke upon it with destructive fury.

CHAPTER VII.

SLAVERY, 1846—1866.

Long before 1848 the subject of slavery had become involved in the mesh of politics. In the presidential campaign of 1844 party spirit ran high in both the North and the South. Another election was now at hand, and the contending parties were preparing for battle.

The Presbyterian Church had never pretended to direct political thought; it contented itself with working on the heart and conscience, and thus impelling the individual to accept the precepts of the Bible as the rule and guide of his conduct in civil affairs. From this vantage ground it could teach that which was right and descry that which was wrong without mentioning particular instances, especially those which might be within the domain of party politics.

The Springfield Church, as a part of the Church at large, steadfastly adhered to the principle of non-interference in civil affairs. A large part of the congregation, nevertheless, believed that so far as slavery was concerned silence was equivalent to acquiescence, and, if the Church refused its support in a cause so humane and so just, it thereby became a party to the evil. A number of ministers entertained the same

Rev. Adrian Aten.

idea, among the most ardent and aggressive of whom was the former pastor of the Springfield congregation, Rev. Adrian Aten.

After leaving Springfield, Aten had been installed as pastor of the congregation at Red Oak, which was within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Chillicothe. When this body met in April, 1845, he voted in favor of a motion to indefinitely postpone the appointment of commissioners to the General Assembly. The motion was lost, and a protest against the action of the Presbytery was presented by Mr. Aten and Rev. John Shepherd, on the ground that each General Assembly had forfeited the confidence of the Presbytery by the manner in which they had, for twenty years, treated memorials laid before them on the subject of slavery; and "because the action of Presbytery, in this case, is mischievous in its tendency. It is calculated to make the impression on all our churches that this Presbytery acquiesces in the pro-slavery views of the General Assembly, indirectly expressed by their refusing, for the last twenty years, to bear testimony against slavery, and declare it a sin, and in direct conflict with the Word of God and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States."

In the following October, with nine other ministers, he signed a similar protest presented to that body.

On April 8th, 1846, he presented to Presbytery the following paper:

"Whereas, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States has for many years past refused to bear testimony against slaveholding as a censurable practice; and whereas, the General Assembly did, at its meeting in May last, set forth and sanction the sentiment that the holding of slaves under some circumstances is not a sin, and that the renunciation of it ought not to be made a condition of membership in the Church of Christ; and whereas, the Synod of Cincinnati did, at its meeting in October last, declare that they cordially approve the action of the General Assembly in refusing to make slaveholding in itself, without regard to circumstances, a bar to the Christian communion; and whereas, the Presbytery of Chillicothe has, at its present meeting, refused to protest against this action of the General Assembly and Synod of Cincinnati, and ought to decide on the character of slaveholding: Therefore, the undersigned believe that the General Assembly and Synod of Cincinnati, in this action, have departed from the Word of God and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in a vital and fundamental principle, and that the Presbytery of Chillicothe, in this matter, recreant to the trust committed to them by the Head of the Church, does hereby, in

the fear of God and the conscientious discharge of duty, decline the jurisdiction of Presbytery until they shall come to what he believes to be the principles of the Word of God and the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in regard to slaveholding."

Thus did Rev. Aten withdraw from the church; in the succeeding November an elder from Red Oak informed the Presbytery "that their late pastor had ceased preaching to said church." The seceding minister turned his steps toward the fields of his former labors at Springfield. When he arrived a spirited trial of unusual interest was drawing to a close. One of the elders had refused to sit as a member of the ecclesiastical tribunal, and his defection in several other matters was becoming serious. A great number, too, of wealthy and influential citizens and church members harbored decided anti-slavery sentiments. When cited "to appear and show cause for absence from divine worship," they pleaded that they had "some scruples as to the attitude of the church on the subject of slavery."

The malcontents heartily approved the course of Aten; they cordially received him on his return, as they saw in him the champion of their cause. No one was better qualified to lead them. Possessed of a rugged physique, and of a commanding personal appearance; fearless, dogmatic and at times harsh in

the expression of his opinions, he began a campaign against slavery that for intensity and force satisfied the abolitionists and raised him in their judgment to the plane of a popular hero.

The Associate Reformed Church having taken an unequivocal stand in favor of anti-slavery, he proceeded in 1849 to erect a church of this denomination. The building was located on the lot where the present school building stands. It was constructed of brick and painted red. It was here that itinerant lecturers found a pulpit from which to deliver their invectives against the ownership of human chattels. It can not be said that all were entertained in a becoming manner. Transient visitors at the taverns and young men of the town, in the exuberance of their spirits, stood without the door and windows and frequently interrupted the discourse of the speaker by throwing missiles, some of which did not belong to the Inorganic Kingdom.

When the Associate Reformed Church was regularly organized it was found that about one-third of the old congregation had followed Mr. Aten. They are designated as his followers because it is the consensus of opinion that those who became identified with the Associate Reformed Church loved the leadership of their pastor more than the tenets of that denomination.

The defection of so many communicants left the

Presbyterians in severe straits. They still outnumbered the seceding brethren, but among the latter were men of wealth, whose pecuniary contributions now withheld, increased their distress. Their minister, in the spring of 1848, presented a paper to the session which called the attention of that body to "the movements of a certain denomination of Christians in this place, which movements were supposed to be in some important respects injurious and dangerous to the interests particularly of this church."

It was ordered that this paper be kept on file for future reference and use. From this instrument and the evidence at hand it may be deduced that Stone hoped to avert the impending storm by calling the attention of the elders to the errors of the seceders, and by the enforcement of regulations and laws, already too rigid and severe.

Mr. Stone was of a mild and pacific disposition. In times of peace his voice and efforts were a mightier force for the conversion of sinners than those of his rival, but in times of strife his powers and influence were not as effective as those of the strong, popular and eloquent apostle of the abolitionists.

It was not the desire or inclination of Stone to foster discord in his church; rather would it have been gratifying to him could he have restored the harmony that characterized the first four or five years of his pastorate. The lessening of his influence

among part of the congregation kept pace with the passing of the days, and he longed for other vineyards in which he might labor in peace.

Notwithstanding the importunities of his friends, the futility of his efforts in behalf of unity and peace caused him on June 5th, 1849, to request the Presbytery "to dissolve the pastoral relation between himself and the church."

He returned occasionally to preach to the people he had served with great fidelity for eight years. All feelings of animosity soon disappeared, and it was not long until his effective work in the cause of the Redeemer was recognized by the whole community. His love and affection for the Springfield congregation impelled him, in 1876, to write:

"I hardly dare trust myself very far in the personelle of the church and congregation at Springdale. Alas! the congregation that was in my time there has largely passed away. I can count up some seventy who have passed away since my first acquaintance with them, and I suppose there are a good many more that have not come to my knowledge. I would have to go to the graveyard to find the most of my flock. I do wish with great desire to see the place once more where I ministered eight years. When the Lord shall call me hence, may God grant me to meet those beloved souls in a better land. Tell the young people

TURNER'S TAVERN.

all to 'stand up for Jesus' as did their fathers of blessed memory. In the godly character of the fathers who planted the Springdale Church you have a glorious inheritance: do not abuse it. To the aged members, and some yet remain, let me say: Stand fast in the faith and hope to the end. In a little while our earthly course will be finished and we shall meet above. My heart warms toward you; God bless you."

At the time of the resignation of Mr. Stone the session was meeting regularly every week, issuing citations, hearing testimony, admonishing and suspending refractory members, and converting the church into what the irreligious called a "courthouse." "Let us go down to the 'courthouse' and listen to ————————'s trial," was the invitation given to the guests at Turner's tavern by a village roustabout.

The absence of their former minister did not prevent the elders from proceeding with judicial business. At their request Rev. Adam Gilliland, of Oxford Presbytery, presided at the celebration of the Lord's Supper on September 2d; shortly afterwards the session, having on hand some important business in reference to one who had neglected his Christian duties, invited Rev. G. M. Hair, then minister of the Montgomery Church, to be their moderator. The

culprit in this instance escaped sentence by professing "sorrow for his course and declaring his readiness to unite again with the church in the performance of his Christian duties."

During the summer and winter and the succeeding spring the elders had been casting about for a suitable person to fill their pulpit. Soon after Stone's retirement they had written to Rev. J. B. Morton, inviting him "to visit the church, with a view to settlement." Their invitation was declined. On February 14th they decided to submit the matter to the vote of the congregation, and Rev. George P. Bergen was unanimously elected. A call for him was presented to Presbytery, and on May 1st, 1850, he was installed. Rev. G. M. Hair, of Montgomery, preached the sermon from 1st Corinthians ii. 2; Rev. Sayres Gazley presided and charged the pastor, and Rev. J. Black gave the charge to the people.

No better selection could have been made. Mr. Bergen was eminently qualified to take charge of the complicated affairs of the church. Unlike his predecessor, he was of a somewhat combative nature; while, at the same time, he was not inclined to approve the discipline that was then being exercised. At the beginning of his pastorate he was forced into a trial that equaled in length and acrimony those of former years.

This trial closed the reign of ecclesiastical law in

the Springfield Church. A half century has passed since then, and no one has ever, after trial, been deprived of the privileges of the church of God. Some have appeared before the session, confessed the error of their ways and peacefully withdrawn, but these cases are few and exceptional. Had the church continued in its former course, it could not have survived many years longer. In the tearing up and casting out of the tares, the whole crop of wheat was well-nigh destroyed.

It is due to the foresight, the wisdom and the tact of Rev. George P. Bergen that the church did not drift upon the shoals of destruction. It was not many years after Bergen came to Springfield that the congregation of Mr. Aten, of the Associate Reformed Church, began to dwindle in numbers.

Bergen did not look favorably upon the work being done by his brother clergyman. In 1854 he wrote "A History of the Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Hamilton County, Ohio." It was never published, but the manuscript is in the possession of Mrs. Helen Kemper Blinn, a daughter of Charles A. B. Kemper and the granddaughter of Rev. James Kemper. In this sketch he severely criticizes Aten and charges him with taking advantage of the distress of the church. "Mr. Aten," he says, "abruptly left the Presbyterian Church and soon after became very much enamored with Rausis's version of David's

Psalms. It is very remarkable that Mr. Aten should all at once turn against these spiritual hymns of prayer and praise, which he had sung from his childhood, and that he should so suddenly discover at this particular time that he had grown gray in a gross error in singing these hymns that tell of Christ and him crucified." He adds that "Aten has the honor (in part) of tearing down what he formerly aided in building up. Neither Mr. Aten nor any other man would have thought of building up an Associated Reformed Church here had he not seen an opportunity of getting lively stones from our quarry to lay the foundation." In reference to those who had left the Presbyterian Church Bergen says: "We love them still, and hope to see the day when they shall return to the church that nourished them in their infancy, and where they justly and properly belong."

There was an early fruition of Mr. Bergen's hopes. The communicants who had left the church because of their dislike to the former pastor returned. Even the member who was suspended on charges preferred by Mr. Stone was admitted again to the communion.

The session, too, was not so obstinate as in former days respecting the policy of the church in regard to slavery. As the appalling shadows of civil strife and bloodshed crept nearer and nearer, the church approached nearer the ideas of the abolitionists, and

soon it was declared that to oppose slavery was a Christian virtue.

The unpopular and unnecessary discipline now being relaxed, and the church being in sympathy with the anti-slavery doctrines, there was no incentive to desert and unite with the Associated Reformed Church.

Aten had fought a good fight and finished his course. His usefulness in Springfield was at an end. The Associate Reformed Church that he had used as the medium through which he could preach the doctrine of human freedom ceased to exist in Springfield. He again took his departure, leaving a name honored and revered to this day. The "little red church" that had served his purpose stood for a few years silent and desolate; the windows were closed and the doors barred; the bell ceased to toll, and the owls and bats took up their abode in the belfry. Two years after Grant and Lee met under the folds of the stars and stripes at Appomattox Courthouse the building was demolished.

The pastorate of Mr. Bergen was in all respects successful. Order was brought out of chaos and the church placed in a position in which it might become a power for good. As early as 1853 a series of revival meetings had admitted thirty-four persons to the privileges of the sacrament. In 1856 he stated that

there "had been added to the communion fifty-one on examination and nine on certificate, amounting in all to sixty." He mingled freely with his flock and entered with zest into the spirit of their festivities. He was a lover of outdoor sports, and hunting was his favorite pastime. He became known as the Nimrod of Springfield. Because of Mr. Bergen's hunting proclivities, Elder Kemper thought the pastor overstepped the proprieties of his calling, and consequently bought his gun with the condition that he should hunt no more.

When Bergen left Springfield in 1857 the total number of communicants was one hundred and thirty-four, and the church united and strong. The outlook at the close of his pastorate was as bright and auspicious as the beginning had been dark and foreboding. "My stay in Springdale," he writes to a subsequent pastor, "was pleasant and harmonious throughout, and I hope in 'that day' to meet some of my dear friends and brethren whom I loved so well in Springdale."

The Springdale congregation had from the beginning been especially favored by ministers outside its bounds. The neighboring pastors considered it their province to aid and assist them. The pastors at Hopewell, Duck Creek and Pollock's Run had sympathized with them in their struggles and trials, and rendered valuable assistance.

The generation of clergymen who had been instrumental in sustaining the church during the first half century of its existence had, before 1857, passed from the scenes of human action.

When the scholarly, magnetic and eloquent Bergen left it seemed that one period of the church history was ended and another beginning. A younger generation was now to carry on the work. The old order of things must give way to the new. A number of clergymen and other professional men were at this time settling in Springdale and the neighboring villages. Many of these afterwards attained state and national prominence in various fields of activity; none, however, contributed more to the welfare of the church during the next forty years or more than Dr. Ludlow D. Potter, the President of the Glendale Female College.

While the congregation was endeavoring to find some one qualified to take up the work of Mr. Bergen, Dr. Potter served the church for nearly a year and until Rev. Thomas E. Hughes was installed in 1858. The college in which Dr. Potter labored so successfully until the close of the century wielded a potent influence in developing Presbyterian thought throughout the valley. An examination of the list of the alumni shows that the institution received the support of the community of Springdale from its earliest days,

and in return it contributed to the general elevation of culture and refinement.

The pastorate of Rev. Thomas E. Hughes, in comparison with those of former years, was quiet throughout. The storm had blown over and the congregation met to worship in spirit and in truth. All prayed that the scourge of war might not afflict them, and with one voice they joined their supplications to Almighty God to release the slave from bondage. It was no longer necessary to conceal their opinions concerning this important matter. A score of years had reversed the popular sentiment, and the pro-slavery advocates were in turn obliged to maintain secrecy in thought, word and action.

During Aten's second residence in Springfield he was a member of a secret organization that, because of its anti-slavery tenets, was looked upon by the Presbyterians as an institution in no wise to be recognized as either Christian or beneficial to the interests of the country at large. When the first shot of the Civil War echoed across Charleston harbor, it was deemed an honor to be identified with any order that had for its object the abolition of slavery. Mr. Aten after 1861 could have heard sermons on the subject of slavery, preached in the Presbyterian Church, that equaled in force his own discourses, delivered in 1850, in the church built for him by his friends. He considered this a vindication of his opposition to Pres-

byterian conservatism. If slavery was an evil in 1861 and contrary to the law of God, it could not have been otherwise in 1850 or the preceding years. Recognized and approved in the United States from the inception of the government, it was long before it was learned that what was universally approved might not be right.

Mr. Aten was designated by one of his clerical brethren as "a disorganizer, holding revolutionary views, a creator of strife and dissension, both within and without the church." It was the influence of the times that impelled the sincere and devout churchman to use such acrimonious language. A decade afterwards, when millions signified their willingness to take up arms for the cause for which Aten pleaded and suffered, those who had once condemned the abolitionists now gave the cause their hearty approval and support. Had it not been for the efforts of men like Aten, who had the courage to stand firmly for their convictions, and to fight for them even in the face of the opposition of multitudes, the cry of bondage and distress would be heard to-day from the gulf to the lakes.

The asperities incident to his career in the service of the Associate Reformed Church quickly melted away, and the Presbyterians at length considered it an especial favor when he filled their pulpit. He was one of the pioneers who blazed the way, and, this

accomplished, the masses followed cheerfully and sincerely.

The ministrations of Rev. Thomas E. Hughes in behalf of his congregation were attended with average success. In 1860 Mr. C. A. B. Kemper asked for letters of dismission and became a member of the newly organized church at Glendale. The loss of his valuable aid was deeply felt. His faithfulness in the performance of his duties as an elder equaled that of his father as a minister. The Springfield Church owes much to both father and son. The wisdom of the course of the latter in the matter of discipline was questioned, but all could testify that he displayed the outward marks of a Christian and walked as a man of God. In seasons of sunshine and of shadow he manifested the same obstinate determination to maintain and uphold the church. He was not alone in his efforts. D. B. Gaston and Benjamin Snoddy contributed their full share, and preceding 1850 Peter Perlee, Thomas Q. Skillman and B. B. Rusk were their efficient coadjutors.

All the elders were men of superior moral endowments. The Puritans were not more staid in their deportment. They never deviated from the paths of rectitude, or "walked in the way of sinners." The sincerity of their motives was never questioned nor their integrity impeached. They differed among themselves, on minor points, as to the true interpre-

tation of the Scriptures, and this at times created a friction of opinions; but they all agreed that the fundamental doctrines of their religion were clearly stated in the Confession of Faith, and that all who did not share in this belief should be excluded from the communion.

Fearless in the discharge of their duty as they conceived it, an unequivocal adherence to the principles of correct living was demanded of every member of the church. If in this their judgment was not always approved by the congregation and the community at large, it was only because of a difference in the conceptions of right and wrong.

On June 2d, 1860, Benjamin Whallon and Perry Colburn were ordained as elders, and in the following September the latter was elected clerk of the session. The condition of the church during the next four years is fairly illustrated in his report to the Presbytery in April, 1864. "There has been perfect harmony and good will," he says, "in the congregation, notwithstanding the turbulent times upon which we have fallen."

At the close of the two succeeding years a spirit of revival began to manifest itself, and the membership was increased by thirty-four accessions, making a total of one hundred and sixty-three in full communion.

"At the meeting of Presbytery of Cincinnati

at Lebanon, April 4th, 1866, the pastoral relation between the Rev. Thomas E. Hughes and the Springfield congregation was dissolved."

There lingers around the pastorate of Mr. Hughes an impression indistinct and uncertain, amid conflicting opinions, that it was not as successful as those of his predecessors, but if peace and harmony are the criteria of success, it far excelled them.

Whatever may have been the comparative merits of the pastorates of Thomson, Aten, Stone, Bergen and Hughes, all of them must give way to that now about to be inaugurated and which has few, if any, parallels in the State, both in its duration and its achievements.

Rev. William H. James.

CHAPTER VIII.

DR. WILLIAM H. JAMES, 1866—1902.

One evening in May, 1864, a young man was encamped with his companions on the banks of the Potomac. The night was dark and stormy, and the turbid waters of the river, spreading beyond its channel, rolled sullenly toward the sea. Midst the gloom of the fog, that hung like a pall over the valley, were scattered a number of tents, from which issued the dismal cries of wounded soldiers who had fallen in the battle of the Wilderness. Within one of these, and under the glare of a torchlight that served to heighten the weird aspects of his surroundings, the young man was aiding the army surgeons in the amputations. His heart sickened at the gruesome sight of bleeding hands, arms and legs thrown promiscuously into piles beside the operating tables; yet he did not falter or cease his ministrations, save at times to turn and brush away the tears that could not be suppressed.

The subject of these heartrending experiences was William H. James, a graduate of Lafayette College and a student in Princeton Theological Seminary. He had been appointed as agent of the United States Sanitary Commission, and was then in the dis-

charge of his duty. Soon afterwards he was found in Fredericksburg, where, with three or four assistants, he had charge of one hundred and sixty-three mangled soldiers who had been placed in an improvised hospital lately used as a tin-shop.

It was here that during the day, and ofttimes far into the night, he endeavored to assuage the pain of the sufferers; he whispered wise counsel to the dying and became the messenger who carried their last words to the loved ones at home.

In August the Commission appointed him captain of supplies of the Sixth Army Corps. He served in this capacity until the following fall, when he resumed his studies in Princeton Seminary, from which institution he was graduated in the summer of 1865.

He was now prepared to enter the Presbyterian ministry. Endowed with an exceptional keenness of intellect, and being, both by training and by nature, of a devout turn of mind, few were better equipped for their chosen calling. It is said that from his earliest childhood his desire was to be a clergyman, and the course of his education had always been with this end in view.

In 1865 the congregation of the Seventh Presbyterian Church of Cincinnati became so large that it was decided to secure an assistant to aid the Rev. N. C. Burt. George L. Miller, then a prominent manufacturer, was a member of the session. He had

met the theological student the preceding year at Princeton, and remembered that he was to be graduated the following summer. Being very favorably impressed with the ability and sincerity of the young minister, who had recently been licensed by the Presbytery of Passaic, New Jersey, the session, acting upon the suggestion of Mr. Miller, tendered Mr. James a call to become the assistant pastor of the church. He accepted and immediately began his career as a clergyman.

During the winter and the following spring he had so engrafted himself on the good will of Dr. Burt and the congregation that they cheerfully volunteered to sacrifice themselves and aid their assistant pastor to obtain a charge under his sole care. When Rev. Thomas Hughes left Springfield Mr. James was asked to preach at that place. He did so, and then went to Illinois. He had about concluded to remain permanently in that State, when a call from the session of the Springfield Church was placed in his hands by the Cincinnati Presbytery. He returned to Ohio and began preaching at Springdale in July, 1866. In the following October he was duly installed and ordained. He was always of the belief that some one connected with the Seventh Church had kindly recommended him to the members of his congregation.

The dawn of brighter days was now beaming on the church. A reign of harmony and good will was

instituted, to remain undisturbed to the present day. The New Light schism had long been forgotten; the Old and New School Presbyterians had again joined hands in Christian fellowship; the slaves were free and furnished no subject for dissension and strife. Zealous in the cause of the Master, and filled with high hopes and noble aspirations, the pastor looked over the field of his future labors. It was evident from the outlook that the membership could scarcely increase. On every side churches had been organized. The former prestige of Springdale was fast passing away; the business of the tavern-keeper was lost forever; the rumbling of the stage coach had ceased, and the new generation was seeking homes in the more convenient village of Glendale.

Mr. James perceived that, although the membership of the church might not increase, yet its influence for good would not wane if it adhered to the principles that had preserved it for three-quarters of a century. Other religious institutions had sprung up within its shadow, but they had not dimmed the light of Truth that emanated from the old church, to which all others looked for guidance and advice.

The policy that he instituted for the government and practice of the church was conducive to its moral and spiritual advancement. If any revivals were held, they were conducted with a propriety that excited admiration. The converts were led to the Cross by

quiet persuasions and appeals to the reason and conscience, and the neophyte seldom returned to the ways of the world. This pastorate might be considered as one long revival. His intense zeal for the salvation of men impelled him to pursue the sinner at all seasons, holding up to him the means of divine grace.

Dr. James had not been long in Springdale * before his superior ability was recognized throughout the valley.

It was fortunate for the people of the Miami Valley that two young ministers of rare accomplishments were beginning their work in the ministry. There is no brighter page on the records of the achievements of those who have toiled in Southern Ohio than that which contains the names of Dr. William H. James and Dr. Samuel K. Holtsinger. For more than a third of a century they have been as closely identified with the progress of civil, spiritual and temporal affairs in the country between the Miamis as were Blackburn and Nelson with those of Tennessee and Kentucky in the days of the pioneers and frontiersmen.

Dr. Holtsinger was born in a log cabin in Washington County, Tennessee. His father was a min-

* The name of Springfield was now changed to Springdale (1867).

ister, supplementing the salary he received as such by running a tanyard. When John Morgan was killed in Greenville, where the elder Holtsinger was then preaching, a cannon ball shot by the rebels, who were encamped on College Hill, east of the town, struck the church above the door, displacing a few bricks. The minister refused to permit the bricks to be replaced, holding that "it showed his church was on the side of the Union."

Dr. Holtsinger was graduated from Ewing and Jefferson College in 1861, at the time when the war clouds were gathering. Being strongly in sympathy with the Union cause, he was arrested in 1862 and taken before Colonel Leadbetter, who dismissed him with the statement that he desired the arrest of the young man's father, whom he considered a dangerous man to the Confederacy.

The day soon arrived when the Confederacy demanded his services in the army. He resolved never to enlist as a rebel, and therefore "scouted," as it was called by the Northern people. For seventeen days he stayed alone in the woods. Then, with four other refugees, he dug a hole in the ground near a stream of water, and covered their hiding place with boards and leaves, so as to completely conceal them. Every night a colored man, the only one who knew of their whereabouts, brought them a

Rev. Samuel K. Holtsinger.

basket of provisions. They remained in this den for fourteen days.

Holtsinger then attempted to pass the rebel lines. He was guided by an old man who lived in the mountains and knew every pass into Kentucky. When he arrived near Cumberland Gap he heard the roar of cannon. Powell's Valley was filled with Confederates, and the pickets could not be circumvented. He returned to the country where food could be obtained, and upon his second attempt reached the Federal army, in which he enlisted. In 1863 he was honorably discharged. He then went to Hamilton, Ohio, where he worked in a machine shop for eight months. Early in 1864 he was called to Sharon, Ohio, to take charge of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church at that place.

Nothing of unusual interest occurred in the Springdale Church until the spring of 1869. A series of meetings increased the membership and strengthened and enlarged the interests of the church. In the fall of the same year the pastor aided in founding the Oak Hill Sunday-school, an institution which for more than thirty years has exercised a powerful influence in leading children and youths through their early religious experiences into the Church of God. Dr. James has guided and directed the course of the school from the beginning. He at first preached at convenient seasons in the schoolhouse where the

meetings are held, but for several years he has preached regularly at Oak Hill once a month.

In addition to his work in Springdale, Dr. James became pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Sharon on May 14th, 1871. He preached here every Sunday for twenty-two years and eight months. The influence of the old Springdale Church was extended to the communities west of the town. Her pastor preached at the small settlements of Pleasant Run, Burlington and Science Hall. In 1875 he and Dr. Holtsinger were guiding the spiritual affairs of ten or more localities.

The first ten years of Dr. James's pastorate were attended with more than ordinary success. Far from the congregation decreasing, it is recorded, in 1876, that "never before in the church's history have so many communicants been known to the session." This increase in the membership is remarkable when considered in connection with the fact that, during the ten years preceding, the session had honorably dismissed "five ruling elders and a sufficient number of members to sustain another church." During the ten years succeeding 1876 the growth of the church was about the same as that of the preceding decade.

In 1885 the old church building, which had been erected in 1833, was replaced by an edifice more in harmony with modern ideas. The corner-stone was laid on June 16th, Judge Samuel F. Hunt delivering

Church Erected in 1885.

the address. The new house of worship was dedicated on May 16th, 1886. It is a brick building with a stately tower on the southwest corner, and contains a large auditorium, the pastor's study and class-rooms. Its attractiveness is increased by several memorial windows, among which is one the gift of Mrs. J. S. Crawford and Dr. Benjamin Perlee, and another the gift of Dr. S. S. Close and Mrs. S. E. McCormick. The memorial window to Dr. John R. Hunt was presented by his son, Judge Hunt. It attracts attention not only from the beauty of design, but from the execution itself. The Master is represented as the great Physician in the act of healing the sick. The expression of the Savior is that of divine compassion, while that of the sick man is one of humble supplication. In the background is an Oriental scene, with palm trees and foliage in richest coloring. A brass tablet bears the following inscription:

DR. JOHN RANDOLPH HUNT,
A student of Nassau Hall, a graduate of the
College of Physicians and Surgeons of
New York, and for forty years
A practicing physician in the Miami Valley.
Born at
Cherry Hill, near Princeton, New Jersey,
December 10, 1795,
Died at Springdale, Ohio,
August 1, 1863.

The old marble tablet, whose injunction thereon had been an inspiration to the worshipers for fifty years, was placed over the main entrance to the church. On it are inscribed the words: "Come and let us go up into the mountain of the Lord, and into the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths."

The records of the church for the last four decades will never reveal to future generations the progress it has made, the high esteem in which the pastor is held by his people, and the faithfulness and acceptability of his ministrations. This can only be learned from contemporary accounts of meetings held to celebrate events of unusual significance.

The exercises and addresses on the occasion of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Dr. James's pastorate are illustrative of the status of the church and the love and esteem that the minister had awakened among the members of the Presbytery and the people unto whom he had ministered. The meeting was held in the Springdale Church on Wednesday, July 29th, 1891. "The day was perfect, and the soft air of the July afternoon came through the church windows laden with the fragrance of the meadows, while the song of birds mingled with the melody of the music." A committee, consisting of the venerable Dr. Chidlaw, Dr. Mussey and Dr. Ritchie, presented to the church and pastor the con-

gratulations of the Presbyterian Ministerial Association. Dr. Monfort then delivered an address in which he referred to several incidents of historical interest. He said:

"I feel sure that I enjoy this occasion as much as any one present, not only because of my interest in this pastorate of twenty-five years and my high regard for the pastor, but especially for my knowledge of this field and my acquaintance with its leading people for three-quarters of a century. Since 1815 or 1816 I have very frequently been present at meetings of the church, generally for several days together. My father, Francis Monfort, was pastor at Hamilton, and John Thomson, the pastor here, was his nearest neighboring minister, and they assisted each other, often more than once a year. Sacramental meetings in those days began on Friday and closed on Monday, and ministers' families and others of neighboring congregations were present. So my memory began to take in this people from the time I was five years old, and has been gaining new knowledge ever since. I knew the people and where they lived. The names of the leading families were as household words — Hunt, Hall, Hueston, Hunter, Cochran, Whallon, Perlee, Schooly, Watson, Riddle, Skillman, Allen, Blackburn, Peterson, Hilts, Gaston, Rowland, Williams and others.

"For five years from 1838 I saw nothing of this church, but in 1843 I came here to aid the pastor, my friend and college classmate, Rev. Jared M. Stone, at a communion, beginning March 5th and continuing nine days. It was a season of revival and ingathering. The number added to the church was thirty-three. Two young men, subjects of the work, became ministers — Rev. L. I. Drake and Rev. J. M. Drake. This meeting renewed and increased my interest in this church. Twelve years after this meeting I came to Cincinnati, and a year after to Glendale, and renewed my acquaintance with this church. Rev. George P. Bergen was pastor until 1859, and Rev. T. E. Hughes to 1865. While living in Glendale (over nine years), I was not only very often in this pulpit, but my neighborly and business relations with the people were constant and pleasant. For twenty-six years since I left Glendale I have known little of you, except by the hearing of the ear, but I have not forgotten you or your parents. Ye are beloved for your fathers' sake. I pray that you may be followers of them 'who by faith and patience have inherited the promises.' The promise of the covenant-keeping God to your fathers, and to you also, is: 'The promise is to keep you and your children, and to those that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call.'

"I have been antedating the present pastorate.

As to the present twenty-five years others can speak better than I. On this I have but few words. The pastor has reminded me that I gave him the charge at his ordination twenty-five years ago. I feel like giving him a charge to-day. 'Meddle not with them that are given to change.' Stand in your lot while you live, if the Lord will. You can never know another people and their wants as you do here. What you know of those in your charge is a large part of your capital, and you can not carry it away with you to another charge. God has blessed you above many others, and has taught you that this is a part of his vineyard in which you can be useful and glorify him. How many hundreds of minsters I have known who began to decay and decrease by listening to calls from fields they thought better than their own. Some ministers have but little comfort left but the promise, 'Ye shall not visit all the cities of Israel until the kingdom of God shall come.' One city is enough. Ten cities, with ten consecutive homes, is not equal to one home in one city.

"We can not forget, in the midst of our gratitude to God for what he has accomplished, that the time is short. 'The fashion of the world passeth away.' 'Our fathers, where are they, and the prophets — do they live forever?' Sixteen of the ministers of the Presbytery when Brother James came among them have passed away — Gazley, Slack, Chestnut, Tracy,

Burt, Gill, White, McKinney, Black, Wampler, Young, Cortelyou, Cushman, Mitchell, Grundy and Annan; nearly twice as many have died who became members since. They that remain may well adopt the motto of the great Teacher: 'I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

A number of letters which were read after Dr. Monfort's address is the best evidence of the exceptional progress of the church and the success attained by the pastor. Rev. R. H. Van Pelt, of Lawrence, Kansas, wrote: "Twenty-five centuries will not see the completion of the results you have been inaugurating during the past twenty-five years." Rev. A. J. Snyder, of Deerfield, New Jersey, declared that, "As a church we feel highly honored that we have such a noble son in the Gospel ministry, who is laboring with so much acceptance in the Master's vineyard, and giving abundant proof of his usefulness and efficiency." Dr. Joseph F. Tuttle, of Crawfordsville, Indiana, said: "The history of your church is rarely exceeded in interest. It is venerable in years, noble in its ministry and rich in its fruits." Another letter contains the reflections of Dr. John J. Francis: "The recollections of experiences both joyful and sorrowful in the church, in the homes of God's children and in the community — the births and deaths, the mar-

riages and funerals, and social gatherings, and sick rooms, the baptism and the reception into the church, the communion services, and all the thousand scenes through which a minister of Christ passes as the years go by — all these experiences have been yours." Dr. F. L. Patton, President of Princeton Seminary, of which institution Dr. James is an alumnus, sent the following message: "May God bless you in coming as in past years. May you continue to be enthroned in the affections of your people, and may you have increasing evidence, year by year, that the pleasure of the Lord is prospering in your hand."

The commendatory expressions set forth in these writings were emphasized in remarks made by Judge Joseph Cox, Dr. Ludlow D. Potter, Dr. Samuel K. Holtsinger, Judge Samuel F. Hunt, and several ministers of the Presbytery.

The congregation held a meeting on November 24th of the following year to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the church. Judge Cox and Judge Hunt delivered addresses on this occasion, and both spoke in terms of praise and commendation of that which this religious society had accomplished in a hundred years. Rev. William O. Thompson, President of Miami University — the institution that had conferred on Dr. James the degree of Doctor of Divinity — reflected the sentiments of the vast con-

course that was present in the following words: "There is something full of reflection in the thought that a church has stood for one hundred years in the best civilization of the best century of the world's existence. It has done its full share in laying deep and broad the foundations of civil liberty, and then there is the touching history of home and family, so intimately identified and associated with the church. It certainly must be a blessed consolation to the people."

Since 1892 Dr. James has continued his ministrations in the church. With a fidelity rarely if ever surpassed, he has served the Springfield congregation for nearly thirty-six years. He has preached fifty-eight hundred sermons and delivered innumerable addresses before various secular and religious societies. The absence of historical landmarks is one of the distinguishing features of his long pastorate. If it has one characteristic that deserves approbation above all others, it is that it has no history, such, at least, as that incident to the pastorates of some of his predecessors. There has been no discord in the church; no trials have been held, with their attendant acrimony and ill feeling. If any of the congregation have been inclined to walk astray, they have been restrained by gentle admonitions, which have proved more efficacious in reclaiming the wanderers in sin than the formal exercise of discipline.

Another factor too potent to be passed unnoticed has contributed largely to the success of the longest of pastorates and the maintenance of piety and peace throughout the community. When on October 12, 1871, Miss Eliza Wilson Cochran was united in marriage to Rev. William H. James, the efficiency of both the church and pastor was greatly augmented. In the life of Mrs. James the congregation had constantly before them an exemplification of untiring faith and Christian resignation. From her countenance there ever beamed a light that, sometimes, seemed to reveal something more than terrestrial. The Christian and unbeliever alike left her presence with the desire to know more of that religion which made her appear so pure and saint-like.

Her death in 1899 was deeply lamented. The Presbytery of Cincinnati, in a memorial dated October 16th, briefly reviewed her life-work: "Mrs. James was the eldest daughter of John M. and Martha J. Cochran, two well-known and influential pioneers of the Millcreek Valley. She was born on her father's farm, in sight of Glendale and Springdale, and it was her fortune to spend her entire life in her native neighborhood. She was educated in Glendale College, under the wise instructions of Rev. Drs. J. G. Monfort and L. D. Potter, now the most venerable members of our Presbytery. At the age of twenty-five years she united with the Springdale Presbyterian

Church, then in the early pastorate of Dr. James to whom she was united in marriage, and henceforth the daughter of the church became the co-pastor. The approbation of the pastor's selection of a helpmeet was as cordial as he himself could wish. For twenty-eight years they lived and labored together. Mrs. James was a woman of great faith, and full of interest and usefulness in all the concerns of the church which had always been hers, but had now become so in a new and larger way. She 'dwelt among her own people.' When her illness came, she wrought more effectively than ever. She served in waiting. She reinforced her husband's pulpit of speech by her pulpit of submission. As his ministry of activity has been long, so has hers of suffering. The Springdale Church has thus had a remarkable co-pastorate. It has had much the longest of our current pastorates, and this pastorate has been reinforced and strengthened by this related ministry of patience and submission. This ministry of patient and cheerful waiting is now ended. God himself has closed it in peace and hope. She has done what she could. She has suffered and glorified the will of God in sweet trustfulness. She was as a 'shock,' with 'the full corn in the ear.' We congratulate our beloved brother upon such a life lived with his own, in sympathy and helpfulness, and the clear, strong testimony given in his own home and in the church she loved so well, of this

life of service and suffering, to the power of the gospel he has so long preached. We sympathize with him in his sorrow, and pray that his own heart may be comforted with that comfort which he himself has so often and so abundantly ministered to others."

In addition to his work among his congregation, Dr. James has well represented his church as a member of the Presbytery of Cincinnati. For more than twenty years he was chairman of the Committee of Home Missions. He originated the scheme of Sustentation, which has been widely adopted by the Presbyterian Church. No one has done more for this cause. Dr. G. C. Heckman, writing in 1891, highly commends his work: "You must permit me," he says, "to congratulate the Presbytery of Cincinnati, which has found in you the most practical and widely useful member it has had for a quarter century. I recall with pleasure the many years during which I was a member of it. During that period was originated the scheme of Sustentation which our Church is so widely adopting. The experimental stages of that American scheme owe their successful issue more to you than to any other man in our Church. When success crowned the Cincinnati experiment, even beyond hopes of the most sanguine, it speedily won friends there, and imitation through-

out the Church. The successful operation of the scheme was largely your work.

Dr. J. G. Monfort testifies that: "No minister in the Presbytery, and, so far as I know, in the Synod, has done more for Sustentation and for the vacant churches. 'The Cincinnati plan,' which is his plan, is recognized in the whole Church, and has been adopted by many Presbyteries as wise and practicable. He has given his time and energy in visiting destitute places, raising money and locating ministers with great success. He has had an active and very influential part in all the great questions that have been before our Church, especially the question of revision and the theological seminaries, and his part in framing action for our Presbytery that has been adopted by other Presbyteries, has given him influence and usefulness in the Church at large."

Dr. James's pastorate has been the longest of any minister in the Presbytery, or of any minister of any denomination in Southern Ohio. As a parliamentarian and an authority on all matters relating to ecclesiastical law it is conceded that he has no superior in the ministry. As an expounder of the Calvinistic system of theology he ranks with the foremost men of learning of his day. The errors of doctrine contained in the inaugural address of Dr. Briggs was first called to the attention of the Presbytery of Cin-

cinnati in an overture of which he was the author. He was among the first, too, to detect the erroneous teachings of Dr. Henry Preserved Smith, and was one of his prosecutors before the General Assembly.

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSION.

It is beyond the scope of this narrative to enter into details in the recognition of the grand work of the members of the Springdale congregation in the domain of civil and religious thought during the last century. The church stands as a memorial to their untiring zeal and Christian enterprise. It has cast its beneficent influence over the generations that have lived and toiled in the Miami Valley, that it might become the fitting abiding place of a God-fearing people. All that the Springfield Church has accomplished for God and humanity will never be known till the judgment day. That she has sent forth many young men to enter the gospel ministry may be reckoned among her manifold services to mankind. Who can tell what these men have wrought under the inspiration of the teachings of the church of their boyhood?

The four sons of Rev. John Thomson were the first to leave with the gracious benedictions of the church resting upon them. All of them became famous exponents of the truth.

One of the founders of Wabash College was Rev.

James Thomson, who was a member of the class of 1826 of Miami University — the first class graduated from that institution. He was licensed to preach on October 25th of the same year by the Presbytery of Cincinnati at Harrison, Ohio.

While pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Crawfordsville he conceived the idea of "the founding of a college somewhere in the Wabash Valley." Nine men, who on November 21, 1832, convened in a small brick house occupied by Mr. Thomson, resolved, "that in view of the wants of this section, it is expedient to attempt the establishment of a literary institution at Crawfordsville." "The next morning," says Dr. Joseph F. Tuttle,* "five ministers of the convention went to examine the tract which had been given as a site for the college.

"They were led by Rev. James Thomson. It is likely that this man, whose thought was behind the whole movement, pointed out the beauty of the situation, covered with noble forest trees, and overlooking the valley with its fine stream. It was still 'nature's unbroken loveliness.' And then he led his friends to the brow of the hill, and pointed out the 'College Spring.' As its limpid waters leaped and flashed down the hillside to the valley below, it may have suggested to them a sort of prophetic hope that like that foun-

* Baccalaureate discourse delivered June 25, 1882.

tain the new college was to become a source of influence, bright, sweet and perennial.

"At last they have looked over the ground and selected the place on which to build.

"And now occurred the famous incident so often referred to. We have noticed the frequency with which these men engaged in prayer whilst coming to the resolution to found a college. They are now assembled on the site of the proposed building. Around them is a scene of great beauty, and only a little way from them the famous spring.

"A slight snow had fallen in the night and covered the ground.

"'These starry blossoms, pure and white,
Soft falling, falling through the night,
Had draped the woods.'

"The scene is described by one of the actors in it. He says: 'Kneeling in the snow, we dedicated the grounds to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for a Christian college.'

"This imposing incident took place on the 22d of November, and was the splendid supplement of the founding of the previous day."

John Steele Thomson graduated in the same class with his brother James. He was ordained in 1829 by the Cincinnati Presbytery at Venice. He assisted in the founding of Wabash College, and in 1834 was

elected to the chair of mathematics, which he filled until his death in 1843. "An incident connected with his last sickness" is related by Dr. Allen: "Knowing his calmness and composure, and of his consciousness of the near approach of death, as also his inquiring and philosophic cast of mind, he was requested to give his feeling in conscious recognition of death in 'articulo mortis.' In due time he gave the signal with a motion of his finger and whispered, 'Like a sinking chill, a cold wave running to the heart; all is peace, no pain.'"

Rev. William M. Thomson was sent as a missionary to Beirut, Syria. He wrote "The Land and the Book,' which is one of the best guides to the "Holy Land" extant, and, in the words of Judge Joseph Cox, "a sure guide to 'The Book.'" Rev. Samuel S. Thomson was engaged for many years in work connected with Wabash College, and afterwards became a professor in a theological college in New York.

During a revival held in 1843, at which Dr. J. G. Monfort was present, L. I. Drake and J. M. Drake were converted. Both of these young men became prominent ministers and labored long in the vineyard of the Lord. Rev. Thomas Whallon and Rev. John L. Aten, the latter being the son of Rev. Adrian Aten, received their early religious training at Springdale, and have served faithfully in Zion for many years.

APPENDIX.

(*a*) The members in communion at the first Sacrament, held May 30, 1802:

John Watson,
William Preston,
Moses Millar,
John McCormick,
Isabella Watson,
Phebe Millar,
Catharine McCormick,
Rachel Cox,
John McCashen,
Susan McCashen,
William Asby,
Abraham Lindley,
Martha Lindley,
Joseph Reddick,
George Drummond,
Rosanna Drummond,
James Watson,
Fanny Watson,
James Andrews,
William Watson,
Catherine Andrews,
William Carnahan,
Mary Carnahan,
Mary Deeker,
James Greer,
Sarah Greer,
Flora Greer,
Sarah Allison,
Aaron Lane,
Elizabeth Lane,
Catherine Wallace,
David Beaty,
Mary Gaston,
Daniel Moore,
Rebecca Moore,
Daniel Skinner,
Isabella Skinner,
Rebecca Walker,
Jacob Powers,
Elizabeth Powers,
Robert Hanes,
Elizabeth Hanes,

Cabel Boylston,
Jane Cummins,
Leah Wilkinson,
Deborah French,
Mary Linniard,
Michael Long,
Agnes Long,
Abigail Long,
Alexander Snodgrass,
Elizabeth Snodgrass,
Anne Piatt,
Mary McCormick,
Andrew Shirk,
Martha Shirk,
——— Lindley,
Margaret Orr,
John Schooly,
Mary Schooly,
David Powers,
Sarah Powers,
Joanna Lindlay,
John Rynearson,
Mrs. John Rynearson,
John Templeton,
Thomas McIntyre,
Margaret McIntire,
Robert McClure,
Mary McClure,
Joanna Templeton.

(*b*) Members received on October 23, 1802:

Charley Williams,
Jane Badgeley,
Rebecca Johnston,
William Millar,
Mary Millar,
Nancy Crane,
Samuel Clark,
Esther Daneen,
Elizabeth Hagerman,
Lot French,
Peggy Pratt,
Jean Lowes,
Catherine Lowes,
Isabelle Watson,
Elizabeth Watson,
Jane Watson,
James McCormick,
Betsy Moore,
Dennis Lindlay,
Betsy Lindley,
Abigail Boylston,
Andrew Wallace,
Jane Carnahan,
Silas Enyart,
Polly Enyart,
Anne Stevenson, Jr.,
Jennie Stevenson,
Mary Joice,

Jacob Powers, Jr.,
Agnes Powers,
Naomi Farmer,
James Daneen,
James Carnahan,
Henson Reeder,
Charity Chesterson.

(*c*) Members received April 9, 1803:

Daniel Long,
John Long,
David Wallace,
Maria Joice,
Reuben Winget,
Elizabeth Winget,
Jane Winget,
Sarah Marshal,
Isaac Johns,
Rhoda Johns,
Robert Caldwell,
Mary Caldwell,
Michael Andrews,
John Ray,
Thomas Gilespy,
Joseph Powers,
Thomas Stone,
John McGilliard,
Susan McGilliard,
Anne Cox,
Elenor Piatt,
James Lowes, Sr.,
William Lowes,
John Wilkinson,
David Enyart,
Stephen Reeder,
Elizabeth Reeder.

(*d*) The following is a complete list of ruling elders from 1800-1902:

John Watson,
William Preston,
Moses Millar,
Thomas McIntire,
Abraham Lindley,
James Andrews,
Benjamin Perlee,
Caleb Crane,
Abram Lindley,
James Vance,
John Watson,
Jehiel Day,
John R. Gaston,
Cornelius W. Hall,
Ezekiel Moore,
Caleb Brown,

William Watson,
William Wilson,
John McCormick,
John Blackburn,
John Gaston,
William Aydelott,
Thomas I. Skillman,
Benjamin Snoddy,
Baltus B. Rusk,
Peter Perlee,
Charles A. B. Kemper,
D. B. Gaston,
William D. Hilts,
Benjamin Whallon,
Perry Colburn,
Herbert B. Mayhew,
William Watson,
James Watson,
Azariah Compton,
John Moore,
James H. Peterson,
Charles B. Compton,
Asher McCowan,
George L. Miller,
Charles Duncan,
James Whallon,
Edgar B. Riddle,
George Scheerer, Jr.